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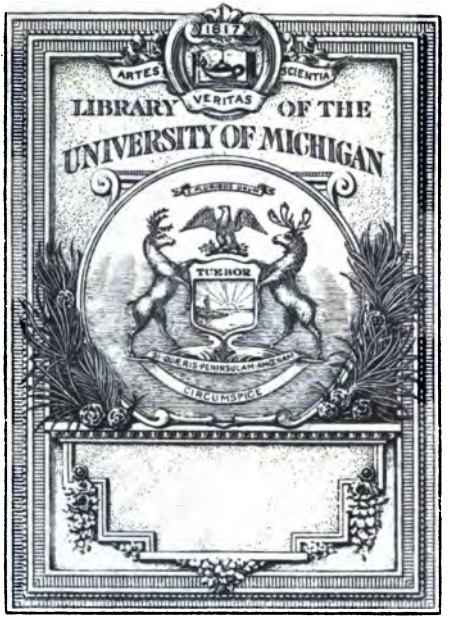
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DIALOGUES

CONCERNING

ELOQUENCE:

WITH A LETTER TO THE

FRENCH ACADEMY,

CONCERNING

RHETORIC,

AND

POETRY.

BY

M. DE FENELON

ARCHBISHOP OF CAMBRAY.

To which is added,

A DISCOURSE PRONOUNCED BY THE AUTHOR AT HIS ADMISSION INTO THE ACADEMY;

with a new Tranſlation of his Dialogues

BETWEEN DEMOSTHENES AND CICERO,

VIRGIL AND HORACE.

Fenelon, François de Salignac [illegible]
[illegible]

DIALOGUES

CONCERNING

ELOQUENCE

IN GENERAL;

AND PARTICULARLY THAT KIND

WHICH IS FIT FOR THE PULPIT:

BY THE

ARCHBISHOP

OF

CAMBRAY,

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH, AND ILLUSTRATED WITH NOTES AND QUOTATIONS;

BY WILLIAM STEVENSON M. A.
RECTOR OF MORNINGTHORP IN NORFOLK.

GLASGOW:
PRINTED AND SOLD BY R. AND A. FOULIS
M. DCC. LX.

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THE TRANSLATOR'S ADVERTISEMENT.

THE French editor has given a full account of the following pieces. I think it needleſs to recommend them: they are the late Archbiſhop of CAMBRAY's. ſome apology however may be expected for my undertaking a tranſlation that deſerved the fineſt pen. all I can ſay, without the appearance of vanity, is, that I was afraid it ſhould fall into worſe hands. I have more reaſon to make ſome excuſe for the unuſual liberty I have taken in tranſlating the Dialogues. 'tis what I could not avoid. their ſtile is extremely conciſe; ſometimes obſcure. and the Paris-edition, (the ſtandard of the other,) is ſo faulty, not only in thoſe places that are mark'd among the unaccurate errata, but throughout the

Dialogues, that either they never had the author's finiſhing hand; or they muſt have been publiſhed from a very defective copy. in order therefore to do him juſtice, I found it neceſſary to cloath his thoughts in an Engliſh dreſs, without confining myſelf always to a ſtrict tranſlation of the French. accordingly I have paraphraſed ſeveral paſſages; tranſpoſed a few; and added whatever ſeemed proper to ſet his true ſentiments in the fulleſt light. I would not have taken ſo much freedom with any piece that the author publiſhed in his life-time, the Letter to the French Academy, that was publiſhed ſome years before his death, is far more correct. in tranſlating it I have kept as cloſe to his ſtile as our language would permit. I have not indeed always expreſſed myſelf ſo ſuccinctly as he: nor did I endeavour it. tho' I admire

conciſeneſs, I prefer perſpicuity, when I cannot be both ſhort and clear.

To illuſtrate and confirm our author's notions I have adorned this tranſlation with many inſtructive, beautiful paſſages, collected from ſome of the fineſt writers both antient, and modern; which are not in the French edition. I have likewiſe added ſome few paſſages of another kind. the quotations themſelves, and the placing of the marks of reference, clearly point out the view with which each paſſage is quoted. if, for this purpoſe, I had everywhere added introductory notes of my own, the reader would have had reaſon to complain of my diſtruſting his judgment.

Some critics will think I have too often neglected ſuch connecting particles as for, but, ſeeing, &c. there is a peculiar beauty in this omiſſion: and I ſhould

have left-out many more, if I had cloſely followed our author's example, or my own judgment. but too much muſt not be attempted at once.

Throughout the following ſheets perhaps there are ſtill too many marks of inaccuracy. I wiſh they may paſs for inſtances of that affected negligence our author recommends. his Letter plainly ſhews that he would not always avoid every little defect: nor ought it to be expected of his tranſlator, if he could. an elaborate ſtile, and a ſcrupulous exactneſs, are inconſiſtent with the familiar ſtrain of a dialogue. it were eaſy to prove that the free, and ſeemingly careleſs manner which might be blameable in other pieces, is really beautiful here; as being a juſt imitation of nature---but I will not lengthen this adverti ſement into a preface.

PREFACE,

English
Bittell
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BY THE

CHEVALIER RAMSAY.

BOTH the antients and the moderns have treated of eloquence, with different views, and in different ways; as Logicians, as Grammarians, and as Critics: but we ſtill wanted an author who ſhould handle this delicate ſubject as a Philoſopher, and a Chriſtian: and this the late Archbiſhop of Cambray has done in the following Dialogues.

IN the antient writers we find many ſolid precepts of rhetoric, and very juſt rules laid down with great exactneſs: but they are ofttimes too numerous, too dry; and in fine, rather curious than uſeful. our author reduces the eſſential rules

of this wonderful art, to theſe three points; proving, painting, and moving the paſſions.

TO qualify his orator for proving, or eſtabliſhing any truth, he would have him a philoſopher; who knows how to enlighten the underſtanding, while he moves the paſſions; and to act at once upon all the powers of the mind; not only by placing the truth in ſo clear a light as to gain attention and aſſent; but likewiſe by moving all the ſecret ſprings of the ſoul, to make it love that truth it is convinced of. in one word, our author would have his orator's mind filled with bright, uſeful truths, and the moſt exalted views.

THAT he may be able to paint, or deſcribe well, he ſhould have a poetic kind of enthuſiaſm; and know how to

employ beautiful figures, lively images, and bold touches, when the ſubject requires them. but this art ought to be entirely concealed: or, if it muſt appear; it ſhould ſeem to be a juſt copy of nature: wherefore our author rejects all ſuch falſe ornaments as ſerve only to pleaſe the ear, with harmonious ſounds; and the imagination, with ideas that are more gay and ſparkling, than juſt and ſolid.

TO move the paſſions he would have an orator ſet every truth in its proper place; and ſo connect them that the firſt may make way for the ſecond; and the next ſupport the former: ſo that the diſcourſe ſhall gradually advance in ſtrength and clearneſs, till the hearers perceive the whole weight and force of the truth. and then he ought to diſplay it in the livelieſt images; and both in his words

and geſture uſe all thoſe affecting move-ments that are proper to expreſs the paſ-ſions he would excite.

IT is by reading the antients that we muſt form our taſte, and learn the art of eloquence in all its extent. but ſeeing that ſome of the antients themſelves have their defects, we muſt read them with caution and judgment. our learned author diſtin-guiſhes the genuine beauties of the pureſt antiquity, from the falſe ornaments uſed in after-ages; he points out what is ex-cellent, and what is faulty, both in ſa-cred and profane authors; and ſhews us that the eloquence of the Holy Scripture, in many places, ſurpaſſes that of the Greeks and Romans, in native ſimplici-ty, livelineſs, grandeur, and in every thing that can recommend truth to our aſſent and admiration.

NOTHING can be more proper than theſe Dialogues, to guard us againſt the vitiated taſte of falſe wit; which ſerves only for amuſement and oſtentation. ſuch eloquence as is founded on vanity and ſelf-love, delights in gaudy ornaments; and neglects the genuine graces of a noble ſimplicity. for, the glittering fancy and quaint turns, and forced antitheſes, the ſmooth periods, and other artificial ornaments of falſe oratory, make a little genius loſe the reliſh of thoſe ſuperior and ſolid beauties that force their way to the mind, and at once enlighten, and captivate it.

THEY who value nothing but wit, will probably diſlike the plainneſs of theſe Dialogues: but they would form another judgment of them if they conſidered that there are different ſtiles of dia-

logue; of which antiquity furniſhes us with two celebrated patterns; the dialogues of Plato; and thoſe of Lucian. Plato like a true philoſopher, ſtudy'd chiefly to give force and light to his arguments; and choſe no other ſtile than what is uſed in converſation: ſo that his language is artleſs, eaſy and familiar. on the contrary Lucian is every-where witty and ſparkling. all the perſons he introduces have a ſprightly delicate fancy; ſo that in reading him, we forget the feign'd characters of gods and men who ſpeak in his dialogues; and cannot but ſee the ingenious author in every thing they ſay. we muſt own however that he is an original, who has ſucceeded wonderfully in this way of writing. he ridicul'd men in the moſt facetious pleaſing manner: while Plato inſtructed them

with gravity and wisdom. the Archbishop of Cambray has imitated them both, on different subjects. in his dialogues of the dead (which he compos'd for the instruction of a young prince that was his pupil,) we find the various wit and agreeable humour of Lucian. and in the following sheets, where he lays down the rules of such a grave eloquence as is proper to move and persuade men; he imitates Plato: every thing is natural, and instructive: and instead of wit and humour we find truth, and wisdom shine throughout the composure.

IT was thought proper to subjoin to these dialogues the author's letter to the French Academy concerning rhetoric, poetry, and other subjects; which has met with so good reception, that it cannot but be acceptable to every polite reader. the

dialogues, tho' but lately publiſhed, were compoſed ſeveral years ago in the Archbiſhop's younger days. but the letter was written in his more advanced age, in anſwer to one that the Academy ſent him by their ſecretary; deſiring his advice on the ſeveral ſubjects he treats of: and therefore it is penned with the utmoſt elegance and politeneſs. however both in the dialogues, and the letter, we find the ſame juſt taſte, the ſame noble genius; the very ſame maxims; and the ſame deſign in writing; to reduce all compoſures to truth, nature, and decency.

DIALOGUES

CONCERNING

ELOQUENCE.

THE FIRST DIALOGUE, BETWEEN A. AND B. AND C.

A. WELL, Sir, I ſuppoſe you have been hearing the ſermon to which you would have carried me. I have but very little curioſity that way, and am content with our pariſh-miniſter.

B. I was charmed with my preacher. you had a great loſs, Sir, in not hearing him. I have hired a pew, that I may not miſs one of his Lent ſermons. O! he is a wonderful man. if you did but once hear him, you could never bear any other.

A. If it be ſo, I am reſolved never to hear him. I would not have any one preacher give me a diſtaſte of all others; on the contrary, I ſhould chuſe one that will give me ſuch a reliſh and reſpect for the word of God, as may diſpoſe me the more to hear it preached every where. but ſince I have loſt ſo much by not hearing this fine diſcourſe you are ſo pleaſed with, you may make up part of that loſs, if you'll be ſo kind as to communicate to us what you remember of it.

B. I ſhould only mangle the ſermon, by endeavour-

ing to repeat any part of it. there were an hundred beauties in it that one cannot recollect, and which none but the preacher himself could display.------

A. Well; but let us at least know something of his design, his proofs, his doctrine, and the chief truths he enlarged on. do you remember nothing? was you unattentive?

B. Far from it: I never listened with more attention and pleasure.

C. What is the matter then? do you want to be intreated?

B. No: but the preacher's thoughts were so refined, and depended so much on the turn and delicacy of his expressions, that tho' they charmed me while I heard them, they cannot be easily recollected; and tho' one could remember them, if they be expressed in other words, they would not seem to be the same thoughts; but lose all their grace and force.

A. Surely, Sir, these beauties must be very fading, if they vanish thus upon the touch, and will not bear a review. I should be much better pleased with a discourse which has more body in it, and less spirit; that things might make a deeper impression on the mind, and be more easily remembred. what is the end of speaking, but to persuade people, and to instruct them in such truths as they can retain?

C. Now you have begun, Sir, I hope you will go on with this useful subject.

A. I wiſh I could prevail with you, Sir, to give us ſome general notion of the elegant harangue you heard.

B. Since you are ſo very urgent, I'll tell you what I can recollect of it. the text was this, * 'I have eaten 'aſhes like bread.' now could any one make a happier choice of a text for Aſh-wedneſday! he ſhewed us that, according to this paſſage, aſhes ought this day to be the food of our ſouls: then in his preamble he ingeniouſly interwove the ſtory of Artemeſia, with regard to her huſband's aſhes. his † tranſition to his Ave Maria was very artful; and his diviſion was extremely ingenious: you ſhall judge of it. (1) 'tho' this duſt (ſaid 'he) be a ſign of repentance, it is a principle of feli-'city: (11.) tho' it ſeems to humble us, it is really a

* PSAL. CII. 9.

† *The Romiſh preachers, in the preamble of their ſermons, addreſs themſelves to the Virgin Mary; and are ofttimes very artful in their tranſition to it, as our author obſerves. we have a remarkable example of this in one of the greateſt French orators, M. L'Eſprit Flechier, biſhop of Niſmes, who ſeems to be oftner than once alluded to in theſe dialogues. in his panegyric on S. Joſeph he introduces his Ave Maria thus.* ----Every thing ſeems to concur to the glory of my ſubject; the Holy Spirit, Jeſus Chriſt, and Mary, are concerned in it; why may I not hope for the aſſiſtance of one of them, the grace of the other, and the interceſſions of the virgin? to whom we will addreſs ourſelves in thoſe words that the angel ſaid to her, and which S. Joſeph no doubt often repeated; Hail! Mary, &c. *Panegyriques*, Vol. I. p. 71.

'ſource of glory: (III.) and tho' it repreſents death, 'it is a remedy that gives immortal life.' he turned this diviſion various ways, and every time he gave it a new luſtre by his antitheſes. the reſt of his diſcourſe was not leſs bright and elegant; the language was polite; the thoughts new; the periods were harmonious; and each of them concluded with ſome ſurprizing turn. he gave ſuch juſt characters of common life, that his hearers found their various pictures faithfully drawn: and his exact anatomy of all the paſſions equalled the maxims of the great ROCHEFOCAULT. in ſhort, I think it was a maſter-piece. but, Sir, I ſhall be glad to know your opinion of it.

A. I am unwilling to tell you my thoughts, or to leſſen your eſteem, of it. we ought to reverence the word of God; to improve ourſelves by all the truths that a preacher explains; and avoid a critical humour, leſt we ſhould leſſen the authority of the ſacred function.

B. You have nothing to fear, Sir, at preſent. it is not out of curioſity that I aſk your opinion; but becauſe I would have clear notions of it; and ſuch ſolid inſtructions as may not only ſatisfy myſelf, but be of uſe to others: for you know my profeſſion obliges me to preach. give us your thoughts therefore, without any reſerve; and do not be afraid either of contradicting, or offending me.

A. Since you will have it ſo, I muſt obey your commands. to be free then; I conclude, from your own

account of this ſermon, that it was a very ſorry one.

B. Why ſo?

A. Why; can a ſermon in which the ſcripture is falſly applyed; a ſcrap of prophane hiſtory is told after a dry childiſh manner; and a vain affectation of wit runs throughout the whole; can ſuch a ſermon be good?

B. By no means: but I do not think that the ſermon I heard is of that ſort.

A. Have patience, and I doubt not but you and I ſhall agree. when the preacher choſe theſe words for his text, 'I have eaten aſhes like bread,' ought he to have amuſed his audience with obſerving ſome kind of relation between the mere ſound of his text, and the ceremony of the day? ſhould he not firſt have explained the true ſenſe of the words, before he applyed them to the preſent occaſion?

B. It had been better.

A. Ought he not therefore to have traced the ſubject a little higher, by entering into the true occaſion and deſign of the Pſalm; and explaining the context? was it not proper for him to inquire whether the interpretation he gave of the words was agreeable to the true meaning of them, before he delivered his own ſenſe to the people, as if it were the word of God?

B. He ought to have done ſo: but what fault was there in his interpretation?

A. Why, I will tell you. David (who was the author of the cii. Pſalm) ſpeaks of his own misfortunes:

he tells us, that his enemies inſulted him cruelly, when they ſaw him in the duſt, humbled at their feet, and reduced (as he poetically expreſſes it) to 'eat aſhes 'like bread;' and 'to mingle his drink with weeping,' now what relation is there between the complaints of David, driven from his throne, and perſecuted by his ſon Abſalom; and the humiliation of a Chriſtian, who puts aſhes on his forehead, to remind him of his mortality, and diſengage him from ſinful pleaſures? could the preacher find no other text in ſcripture? did Chriſt and his apoſtles, or the prophets, never ſpeak of death, and the duſt of the grave, to which all our pride and vanity muſt be reduced? does not the ſcripture contain many affecting images of this important truth? might he not have been content with the words of Geneſis ‡, which are ſo natural and proper for this ceremony, and choſen by the church itſelf? ſhould a vain delicacy make him afraid of too often repeating a text that the holy ſpirit has dictated, and which the church appoints to be uſed every year? why ſhould he neglect ſuch a pertinent paſſage, and many other places of ſcripture, to pitch on one that is not proper? this muſt flow from a depraved taſte, and a fond inclination to ſay ſomething that is new.

B. You grow too warm, Sir: ſuppoſing the literal ſenſe of the text not to be the true meaning of it, the preacher's remarks might however be very fine and ſolid.

‡ GEN. III. 19.

C. As for my part, I do not care whether a preacher's thoughts be fine or not, till I am firſt ſatisfied of their being true. but, Sir, what ſay you to the reſt of the ſermon?

A. It was exactly of a piece with the text. how could the preacher give ſuch miſplaced ornaments to a ſubject in itſelf ſo terrifying; and amuſe his hearers with an idle ſtory of Artemeſia's ſorrow; when he ought to have alarmed them, and given them the moſt terrible images of death?

B. I perceive then you do not love turns of wit, on ſuch occaſions. but what would become of eloquence if it were ſtript of ſuch ornaments? would you confine every body to the plainneſs of country preachers? ſuch men are uſeful among the common people; but perſons of diſtinction have more delicate ears; and we muſt adapt our diſcourſes to their polite taſte.

A. You are now leading me off from the point. I was endeavouring to convince you, that the plan of the ſermon was ill laid; and I was juſt going to touch upon the diviſion of it: but I ſuppoſe you already perceive the reaſon why I diſlike it; for, the preacher lays down three quaint conceits for the ſubject of his whole diſcourſe. when one chuſes to divide a ſermon, he ſhould do it plainly, and give ſuch a diviſion as naturally ariſes from the ſubject itſelf, and gives a light and juſt order to the ſeveral parts; ſuch a diviſion as may be eaſily remembred, and at the ſame time help to connect

and retain the whole; in fine, a diviſion that ſhews at once the extent of the ſubject, and of all its parts. but, on the contrary, here is a man who endeavours to dazzle his hearers, and puts them off with three points of wit, or puzzling ridles, which he turns and plies ſo dextrouſly, that they muſt fancy they ſaw ſome tricks of legerdemain. did this preacher uſe ſuch a ſerious grave manner of addreſs as might make you hope for ſomething uſeful and important from him? but, to return to the point you propoſed; did you not ask me whether I meant to baniſh eloquence from the pulpit?

B. Yes. I fancy that is your drift.

A. Think you ſo? pray what do you mean by eloquence?

B. It is the art of ſpeaking well.

A. Has this art no other end, beſides that of ſpeaking well? have not men ſome deſign in ſpeaking? or do they talk only for the ſake of talking?

B. They ſpeak to pleaſe, and to perſuade others.

A. Pray let us carefully diſtinguiſh theſe two things. men talk in order to perſuade; that is certain: and too often they ſpeak likewiſe to pleaſe others. but while one endeavours to pleaſe, he has another view; which, tho' more diſtant, ought to be his chief aim. A man of probity has no other deſign in pleaſing others, than that he may the more effectually inſpire them with the love of juſtice, and other virtues; by repreſenting them as moſt amiable. he who ſeeks to advance his own in-

tereſt, his reputation, or his fortune, ſtrives to pleaſe, only that he may gain the affection and eſteem of ſuch as can gratify his ambition, or his avarice: ſo that this very deſign of pleaſing is ſtill but a different manner of perſuaſion that the orator aims at; for he pleaſes others to inveigle their affection; that he may thereby perſuade them to what advances his intereſt.

B. You cannot but own then that men often ſpeak to pleaſe. the moſt ancient orators had this view. Cicero's orations plainly ſhew that he laboured hard for reputation: and who will not believe the fame of Iſocrates, and Demoſthenes too? all the Panegyriſts were more ſollicitous for their own honour, than for the fame of their heroes; and they extolled a prince's glory to the skies, chiefly becauſe they hoped to be admired for their ingenious manner of praiſing him. this ambition ſeems to have been always reckoned commendable both among the Greeks and the Romans: and ſuch emulation brought eloquence to its perfection: it inſpired men with noble thoughts and generous ſentiments, by which the ancient republics were made to flouriſh. the advantageous light in which eloquence appeared in great aſſemblies, and the aſcendant it gave the orator over the people, made it to be admired, and helpt to ſpread polite learning. I cannot ſee indeed why ſuch an emulation ſhould be blamed even among Chriſtian orators; provided they did not ſhew an indecent affectation in their diſcourſes, nor in the leaſt enervate

the precepts of the goſpel. we ought not to cenſure what animates young people, and forms our greateſt preachers.

A. You have here put ſeveral things together, which, if you pleaſe, Sir, we will conſider ſeparately; and obſerve ſome method in enquiring what we ought to conclude from them. but let us above all things avoid a wrangling humour; and examine the ſubject with calmneſs and temper, like perſons who are afraid of nothing ſo much as of error, and let us place the true point of honour in a candid acknowledgment of our miſtakes, whenever we perceive them.

B. That is the exact ſtate of my mind; or at leaſt I judge it to be ſo; and I intreat you to tell me when you find me tranſgreſſing this equitable rule.

A. We will not as yet talk of what relates to preachers; for that point may be more ſeaſonably conſidered afterwards. let us begin with thoſe orators whoſe examples you vouched. by mentioning Demoſthenes and Iſocrates together, you diſparage the former; for the latter was a lifeleſs declaimer, that buſied himſelf in poliſhing his thoughts, and giving an harmonious cadence to his periods. he had a very † low and vulgar

† *In the introduction of this very panegyric that our author mentions, Iſocrates ſays,* Such is the nature of eloquence; that it makes great things appear little; and ſmall things to ſeem great; it can repreſent old things as new: and new things as if they were old; and that therefore he would not

notion of eloquence; and placed almoſt the whole of it, in a nice diſpoſal of his words. A man who employed ten or (as others ſay) fifteen years, in ſmoothing the periods of a panegyric, which was a diſcourſe concerning the neceſſities of Greece, could give but a very ſmall and ſlow relief to the republic, againſt the enterprizes of the Perſian king. Demoſthenes ſpoke againſt Philip in a quite different manner. you may read the compariſon that Dionyſius Halicarnaſſius has made of theſe two orators, and ſee there the chief faults he obſerved in Iſocrates; whoſe diſcourſes are vainly gay and florid; and his periods adjuſted with incredible pains, merely to pleaſe the ear: while on the contrary, † Demoſthenes moves, warms, and captivates the heart. he was too ſenſibly touched with the intereſt of his coun-

decline a ſubject that others had handled before him, but would endeavour to declaim better than they.——*Upon which Longinus* (§. 38.) *makes this judicious remark; that by giving ſuch a character of eloquence, in the beginning of his panegyric, the orator in effect cautioned his hearers not to believe his diſcourſe.*

† In oratoribus verò, Graecis quidem, admirabile eſt quantum inter omnes unus excellat. attamen cum eſſet Demoſthenes, multi oratores magni, et clari fuerunt, et antea fuerant, nec poſtea defecerunt. Cic. *Orat.* §. 2.

Quid denique Demoſthenes? non cunctos illos tenues et circumſpectos [oratores] vi, ſublimitate, impetu, cultu, compoſitione ſuperavit? non inſurgit locis? non figuris gaudet? non tranſlationibus nitet? non oratione ficta dat carentibus vocem?—Quintil. lib. xii. cap. 10.

try, to mind the little glittering fancies that amuſed Iſocrates. every oration of Demoſthenes is a cloſe chain of reaſoning, that repreſents the generous notions of a ſoul who diſdains any thought that is not great. his diſcourſes gradually increaſe in force by greater light and new reaſons; which are always illuſtrated by bold figures and lively images. one cannot but ſee that he has the good of the republic entirely at heart; and that nature itſelf ſpeaks in all his tranſports: for his artful addreſs is ſo maſterly, that it never appears. nothing ever equalled the force and vehemence of his diſcourſes. have you never read the remarks that Longinus made on them, in his treatiſe of the Sublime?

B. No: is not that the treatiſe that Mr. Boileau tranſlated? do you think it fine?

A. I Am not afraid to tell you that I think it ſurpaſſes Ariſtotle's rhetoric; which, though it be a very ſolid tract, is yet clogged with many dry precepts, that are rather curious, than fit for practice; ſo that it is more proper to point out the rules of art to ſuch as are already eloquent, than to give us a juſt taſte of rhetoric, and to form true orators. but Longinus, in his diſcourſe of the Sublime, interſperſes among his precepts, many fine examples from the greateſt authors, to illuſtrate them. † he treats of the Sublime in a lofty

† *Thee, bold Longinus! all the nine inſpire,*
And bleſs their critic with a poet's fire:

manner, as his tranſlator has judiciouſly obſerved: he warms our fancy, and exalts our mind; he forms our taſte; and teaches us to diſtinguiſh what is either fine, or faulty, in the moſt famous ancient writers.

B. Is Longinus ſuch a wonderful author? did he not live in the days of Zenobia, and the emperor Aurelian?

A. Yes; you cannot but know their hiſtory.

B. Did not thoſe days fall vaſtly ſhort of the politeneſs of former ages? and can you imagine that an author who flouriſhed in the declenſion of learning and eloquence had a better taſte than Iſocrates? I cannot believe it.

A. I was ſurprized myſelf, to find it ſo: but you need only read him, to be convinced of it. tho' he lived in a very corrupted age, he formed his judgment upon the ancient models; and has avoided almoſt all the reigning faults of his own time; I ſay almoſt all, for, I muſt own, he ſtudyed rather what is admirable, than what is uſeful; and did not conſider eloquence as ſubſervient to morality; nor apply it to direct the conduct of life. and in this he does not ſeem to have had ſuch ſolid views as the antient Greeks, and eſpecially

An ardent judge, who, zealous in his truſt,
With warmth gives ſentence, yet is always juſt:
Whoſe own example ſtrengthens all his laws,
And is himſelf that great Sublime he draws.

Mr. Pope's eſſay on criticiſm, *p.* 45.

ſome of their philoſophers. but we ought to forgive him a failing, for which Iſocrates was far more remarkable, tho' he lived in a more refined age. and this defect ought the rather to be over-looked in a particular diſcourſe, where Longinus does not treat of what is proper to inſtruct men, but of what is apt to move and ſeize their paſſions. I chuſe to recommend this author, Sir, becauſe he will help to explain my meaning to you. you will ſee what a glorious † character he gives of Demoſthenes, from whom he quotes ſeveral paſſages that are moſt ſublime: he will likewiſe ſhew you thoſe faults of Iſocrates that I mentioned. if you be unwilling to take the trouble of becoming acquainted with theſe authors, by reading their works; you may get a very juſt notion of them by conſulting Longinus. let us now

† ----ὁ δὲ ἔνθεν λαβὼν τὸν τῦ μεγαλοφυεσάτυ ϗ ἐπ' ἄκρον ἀρετᾶς συντελεσμένας ὑψηγορίας τόνον, ἔμψυχα πάθη, περιωσίαν, ἀγχίνοιαν, τάχος, ἔνθεν δ', ὃ κύριον, τὴν ἅπασιν ἀπρόσιτον δεινότητα ϗ δύναμιν· ἐπειδὴ ταῦτα, φημὶ, ὡς θεόπεμπτά τινα δωρήματα (ὑ γὰρ εἰπεῖν θεμιτὸν ἀνθρώπινα) ἀθρόα εἰς ἑαυτὸν ἔσπασε. διὰ τῦτο οἷς ἔχει καλοῖς ἅπαντας ἀεὶ νικᾶ, ϗ ὑπὲρ ὧν ὐκ ἔχει, ὡσπερεὶ καταβροντᾷ ϗ καταφέρεται τὰς ἀπ' αἰῶνος ῥήτορας· καὶ θάτ[τ]ον ἄν τις κεραυνοῖς φερομένοις ἀντανοίξαι τὰ ὄμματα δύναιτο, ἢ ἀντοφθαλμῆσαι τοῖς ἐπαλλήλοις ἐκείνυ πάθεσιν. Longinus, §. 34.

leave Iſocrates; and talk of Demoſthenes, and Cicero.

B. You are for leaving Iſocrates, becauſe he is not for your purpoſe.

A. Let us go on then with Iſocrates, ſince you are not yet convinced: and let us judge of his rhetoric by the rules of eloquence itſelf; and by the ſentiments of Plato, the moſt † eloquent writer among the antients. will you be determined by him?

B. I will be determined by him, if he be in the right: but I never reſign my judgment implicitly to any author.

A. Remember this rule: it is all that I ask of you. and if you do not let ſome faſhionable prejudices biaſs your judgment, reaſon will ſoon convince you of the truth. I would therefore have you believe neither Iſocrates, nor Plato: but judge of them both, by clear principles. now I ſuppoſe you will grant that the chief end of eloquence is to perſuade men to embrace truth and virtue.

† Sed ego neque illis aſſentiebar, neque harum diſputationum inventori, & principi longe omnium in dicendo graviſſimo, et *Eloquentiſſimo Platoni*, cujus tum Athenis cum Carneade diligentius legi Gorgiam quo in libro, hoc maxime admirabar Platonem, quod mihi in oratoribus irridendis, ipſe eſſe *Orator* Summus videbatur. **Cic. *de Orat.* lib. 1. §. 11.**

Quid denique Demoſthenes? ----non illud jusjurandum per caeſos in Marathone ac Salamine propugnatores reipublicae, ſatis manifeſto docet praeceptorem ejus Platonem fuiſſe? quem ipſum num Aſianum appellabimus plerumque inſtinctis divino ſpiritu vatibus comparandum? *Quint. lib. xii. cap.* 10. *ſee Longinus* §. *xiii.*

B. I am not of your mind: this is what I have already deny'd.

A. I will endeavour to prove it then. eloquence, if I miſtake not, may be conſidered in three reſpects: as the art of enforcing truth on people's minds, and of making them better: as an art indifferent in itſelf; which wicked men may uſe as well as good; and which may be applyed to recommend injuſtice and error, as well as probity, and truth: and, as an art which ſelfiſh men may uſe to ingratiate themſelves with others; to raiſe their reputation, and make their fortune. which of theſe ends do you admit of?

B. I allow of them all. what do you infer from this conceſſion?

A. The inference will afterwards appear. have patience a little; and be ſatisfyed, if I ſay nothing but what is evidently true, till by gradual advances I lead you to the right concluſion. of the three ends of eloquence, I now mentioned, you will undoubtedly prefer the firſt.

B. Yes: it is the beſt.

A. What think you of the ſecond?

B. I ſee what you drive at: you are going into a fallacy. the ſecond ſort is faulty, becauſe of the ill uſe the orator makes of his eloquence, to enforce error and vice. but ſtill the rhetoric of a wicked man may be good in itſelf, tho' the uſe he makes of it be pernicious. now we are talking of the nature and rules

of eloquence; not of the uſes it ſhould be applyed to. let us keep to the true ſtate of the queſtion.

A. If you will do me the favour to hear me a little, you will find that I have the point in diſpute always in view. you ſeem then to condemn the ſecond ſort of eloquence: or, to ſpeak without ambiguity, you condemn the † abuſe of rhetoric.

B. Right. you now ſpeak correctly, ſo far then we are agreed.

A. What ſay you of the third end of eloquence; I mean the orator's endeavouring to pleaſe others, by talking; that he may raiſe his reputation, or his fortune?

B. You know my opinion already. I reckon ſuch an uſe of eloquence very fair and allowable; ſeeing it excites a laudable emulation, and helps to improve men's talents.

A. What kind of talents would you have chiefly

† *When I conſider the means of* happy living *(ſays an eloquent writer) and the cauſes of their corruption, I can hardly forbear recanting what I ſaid before; and concluding, that eloquence ought to be baniſhed out of all* civil ſocieties, *as a thing fatal to peace and good manners. to this opinion I ſhould wholly incline, if I did not find, that it is a weapon which may be as eaſily procured by* bad *men, as by* good: *and that if* theſe *only ſhould caſt it away, and* thoſe *retain it; the* naked innocence *of virtue would be upon all occaſions expoſed to the* armed malice *of the wicked.*

Biſhop Sprat's hiſt. of the royal ſociety, *p.* 111.

improved? ſuppoſe you had ſome new ſtate, or commonwealth, to model, in what kinds of knowledge would you have the ſubjects trained up, and inſtructed?

B. In every kind that could make them better. I would endeavour to make them good ſubjects, peaceable, obedient, and zealous for the public welfare. I would have them fit to defend their country in caſe of war; and in peace to obſerve and ſupport the laws; to govern their families; cultivate their lands; train up their children to the practice of virtue, and inſpire them with a ſtrong and juſt ſenſe of religion: I would have them carry on ſuch a trade as the ſtate and neceſſities of the country might require: and apply themſelves to ſuch arts and ſciences as are uſeful in common life. theſe, I think, ought to be the chief aims of a law-giver.

A. Your views are very juſt and ſolid. you would then have ſubjects averſe to lazineſs; and employed about ſuch uſeful things as ſhould tend ſomeway or other to advance the public good.

B. Certainly.

A. And would you exclude all uſeleſs profeſſions?

B. Yes.

A. You would allow only of ſuch bodily exerciſes as conduced to people's health, and ſtrength? I do not mention the beauty of the body; for that is a natural conſequence of health and vigour, in bodies that are duly formed.

B. I would ſuffer no other exerciſes.

A. Would you not therefore baniſh all thoſe that ſerve only to amuſe people, and cannot render them fitter to bear either the conſtant labours and employments of peace, or the fatigues of war?

B. Yes; I ſhould follow that rule.

A. I ſuppoſe you would do it for the ſame reaſon that you would likewiſe condemn (as you already granted,) all theſe exerciſes of the mind which do not conduce to render it more ſtrong, ſound, and beautiful; by making it more virtuous.

B. It is ſo. what do you infer from that? I do not yet ſee your drift: your windings are very long.

A. Why; I would argue from the plaineſt principles; and not advance the leaſt ſtep, without carrying light and certainty along with us. anſwer me then, if you pleaſe.

B. Seeing we lay down the rule you laſt mentioned, for the management of the body, there is certainly greater reaſon to follow it in the conduct and improvement of the mind.

A. Would you permit ſuch arts as are only ſubſervient to pleaſure, amuſement, and vain curioſity; and have no relation either to the duties of domeſtic life, or the common offices of ſociety?

B. I would baniſh all ſuch from my commonwealth.

A. If you allowed of mathematicians then, it would be for the ſake of mechanics, navigation, ſurveying of

land, the fortification of places; and ſuch calculations as are uſeful in practice; &c. ſo that it is the uſefulneſs of the mathematics that would recommend them to your patronage. and if you tolerated phyſicians and lawyers, it would be for the preſervation of health; and the ſupport of juſtice.

B. Right.

A. And with the ſame view of uſefulneſs you would admit all other ſerviceable profeſſions.

B. Certainly.

A. But how would you treat the muſicians?

B. I would encourage them.

A. Would you not lay them under ſome proper reſtraint, according to the judgment and practice of the antient Greeks, who always joined pleaſure and uſefulneſs together?

B. Explain yourſelf a little.

A. Tho' they joined muſic and poetry together, and carried both theſe arts to the greateſt perfection; they applied them to inſpire people's minds with fortitude, and noble thoughts. they uſed poetry and muſic to prepare them for battle; and carried muſicians and their various inſtruments, to war. hence came drums and trumpets, which raiſed in them a ſpirit of enthuſiaſm, and a ſort of fury that they called divine. it was by muſic, and the charms of verſe, that they ſoftened ſavage nations: and by the ſame harmony, they ſweetly inſtilled wiſdom into their children. they

made them ſing Homer's verſes to inſpire their minds with the love of glory, liberty, and their native country; and with a contempt of death, and riches, and effeminate pleaſure. they gave their very dances a grave and ſerious turn: for it is certain they danced not merely for the ſake of pleaſure. we ſee, by David's example, † that the eaſtern people reckoned dancing a ſerious kind of employment, like muſic, and poetry. the myſterious dances of the prieſts were adopted by the heathens among their ceremonies, on ſolemn feſtivals, in honour of their gods. there were a thouſand inſtructions couched under their poems, and their fables: nay, their moſt grave and auſtere philoſophy always appeared with an air of gayety, and good humour. all thoſe arts that conſiſted either in melodious ſounds, regular motions of the body, or the uſe of words; muſic, dancing, eloquence, and poetry, were invented to expreſs the paſſions; and, by that means, to communicate theſe paſſions to others. thus did they endeavour to convey noble ſentiments to people's minds, and give them lively affecting views of the beauty of virtue, and the deformity of vice. ſo that all theſe arts, under the ſhew of pleaſure, favoured the moſt ſerious deſigns of the antients; and were uſed to promote morality and religion. even the diverſion of hunting was encouraged to train up the youth for war. their ſtrongeſt pleaſures contained always ſome ſolid inſtruction. from

† 2 SAM. vi. 5, 14.

which ſource flowed thoſe many heroic virtues in Greece, which all ages have ſince admired. it is true, this firſt kind of inſtruction was afterwards changed; and of itſelf was accompanied with remarkable defects. the chief fault of it was, its being founded on a falſe and pernicious ſcheme of religion: in which the Greeks, and all the antient ſages of the heathen world were ſtrangely deceived; being plunged into groſs idolatry. but notwithſtanding this fundamental miſtake, they choſe a very proper way of inſpiring men with religion and virtue: their method was wiſe, agreeable, and apt to make a lively, laſting impreſſion.

C. You ſaid that this firſt inſtitution was afterwards changed: pray, how did it happen?

A. Tho' virtue gives men the true politeneſs; if great care be not taken, politeneſs gradually degenerates into an unmanly ſoftneſs. the Aſiatic Greeks fell firſt into this corruption. the Ionians grew effeminate; and all that coaſt of Aſia was a theatre of luxury. the Cretans too became corrupted, notwithſtanding the wiſe laws of Minos. you know the † verſe that St. Paul quotes from one of their own poets. Corinth was remarkable for its exceſſive riot, and diſſoluteneſs. the Romans, as yet unpoliſhed, began to fall into ſuch practices as quite relaxed their ruſtic virtue.

† Κρῆτες ἀεὶ ψεῦσται, κακὰ θηρία, γαστέρες ἀργαί.
Tit. I. 12.

Athens was not free from the general contagion, with which Greece was all-over infected. pleaſure, which was uſed at firſt as the means to convey wiſdom into people's minds, uſurped the place of wiſdom itſelf: and in vain did the philoſophers remonſtrate againſt this diſorder. Socrates aroſe, and ſhewed his deluded fellow-citizens that the pleaſure, about which they were entirely employed, ought only to be uſed as the vehicle of wiſdom, and an incentive to virtue. Plato, his diſciple, (who was not aſhamed to compoſe his dialogues on the plan and ſubject of his maſter's diſcourſes,) baniſhed from his republic all ſuch muſical notes, ſcenes of tragedy, and poetical compoſitions, (even ſuch parts of Homer himſelf,) as did not incline people to love order, and wiſe laws. this, Sir, was the judgment of Socrates and Plato concerning poets and muſicians: do you approve of it?

B. I am entirely of their mind; and would allow of nothing that is uſeleſs. ſince we may find pleaſure enough in ſolid and valuable things, we ought not to ſeek for it elſewhere. in order to recommend virtue to men's eſteem and practice, we muſt ſhow them that it is conſiſtent with pleaſure: and on the contrary, if we ſeparate pleaſure from virtue, people will be ſtrongly tempted to forſake a virtuous courſe. beſides, that which gives pleaſure only, without inſtruction, can at beſt but amuſe and ſoften the mind. do not you ſee, Sir, how much a philoſopher I am become, by hearing

you? but let us go on to the end: for we are not yet perfectly agreed.

A. I hope we shall be very quickly. and since you are grown so much a philosopher, give me leave to ask you one question more. we have obliged musicians, and poets, to employ their art only for promoting virtue; and the subjects of your new republic are debarred from all such spectacles as can only please, and not instruct them. but what would you do with conjurers?

B. They are impostors that ought to be banished from all societies.

A. They do no harm. you cannot think they are sorcerers: so that you have no reason to be afraid of their practising any diabolical art.

B. No, I do not fear that: nor should I give the least credit to any of their senseless stories. but they do harm enough by amusing the common people. I will not suffer such idle persons in my commonwealth, as divert others from their business, and have no other employment but to amuse people with foolish talk.

A. But, perhaps, they get a livelihood that way; and lay up wealth for themselves, and their families.

B. No matter: they must find out some honest way of living. it is not enough that they seek a livelihood; they must gain it by some employment that is useful to the public. I say the same of all those strolling vagabonds who amuse crouds with silly prattle and foolish songs. for tho' they should never lie, nor say any

thing that is immodeſt; their being uſeleſs to the public is guilt enough. ſo that they ought either to be excluded from the ſociety, or compelled to follow ſome uſeful occupation.

A. Would you not at leaſt tolerate tragedians, provided they repreſent no ſcenes of immodeſty or extravagant love? I do not ask you this queſtion as a Chriſtian: anſwer only as a law-giver, and a philoſopher.

B. If tragedies did not conduce to inſtruction as well as to pleaſure, I ſhould condemn them.

A. Right. in that you are exactly of Plato's opinion: for he would not allow of any poems or tragedies in his republic, that ſhould not firſt be examined by the guardians of the laws: that ſo the people might neither hear nor ſee any thing but what ſhould tend to ſtrengthen the laws, and promote virtue. in this you likewiſe fall in with the ſentiments of other antient authors, who judged that tragedy ought to turn chiefly upon two paſſions; either the terror that ariſes from a view of the fatal effects of vice; or that compaſſion which accompanies the repreſentation of an oppreſſed and ſteddy virtue. Sophocles and Euripides wrote with theſe views, and always endeavoured to excite either pity, or terror.

B. I remember I have met with this laſt rule in Mr. Boileau's Art of Poetry.

A. You are right. he is a man that knows perfectly well not only the foundation of poetry; but likewiſe the

ſolid aim to which philoſophy (ſuperior to all arts) ought to direct the poet.

B. But whither are you leading me all this while?

A. I lead you no farther: you guide yourſelf now; and are happily come to the concluſion I firſt propoſed. have you not ſaid, that in your republic, you would not ſuffer idle people who amuſe others, and have no other buſineſs but merely to talk? is it not upon this principle that you would exclude all ſuch tragedies as do not convey inſtruction as well as pleaſure? now, will you ſuffer that to be done in proſe, that you will not tolerate in verſe? after ſuch a juſt rigour againſt uſeleſs poetry, how can you ſhew any favour to thoſe † declaimers who talk only to ſhew their parts?

† Who can behold, without indignation, how many miſts and uncertainties theſe ſpecious tropes and figures have brought on our knowledge? how many rewards, that are due to more profitable and difficult arts, have been ſtill ſnatched away by the eaſy vanity of fine ſpeaking; for now I am warmed with this juſt anger, I cannot with-hold myſelf from betraying the ſhallowneſs of all thoſe ſeeming myſteries, upon which we writers and ſpeakers look ſo big. and in few words, I dare ſay, that of all the ſtudies of men, nothing may be ſooner obtained, than this vicious abundance of phraſe, this trick of metaphors, this volubility of tongue, which makes ſo great noiſe in the world. but I ſpend words in vain; for the evil is now ſo inveterate, that it is hard to know whom to blame; or where to begin to reform. we all value one another ſo much upon this beautiful deceit, and labour ſo long after it, in the years of our

B. But theſe orators we were ſpeaking of, have two deſigns that are commendable.

A. What are they?

B. The firſt is to maintain themſelves: for, by their profeſſion they procure a ſubſiſtence. their rhetoric gets them repute; and this brings along with it that wealth they ſtand in need of.

A. You yourſelf have already anſwered this pretence; for, did you not ſay that it is not enough that one gains a livelihood, unleſs he get it by ſome employment that is uſeful to the public? he who ſhould repreſent tragedies that give no inſtruction, might get his bread by them: but this would not hinder you from driving him out of your commonwealth. you would ſay to him, 'Go chuſe ſome regular uſeful employment; 'and do not divert your neighbours from their buſi-'neſs. if you would have a lawful gain from them, 'apply yourſelf to do them ſome real ſervice; or to 'make them more wiſe and virtuous.' now why ſhould you not ſay the ſame to the rhetoricians?

B. But I have a ſecond reaſon to offer for tolerating them.

A. Pray, let us hear it.

B. Why; the orator ſerves the public.

A. In what?

education; that we cannot but ever after think kinder of it than it deſerves.

Biſhop Sprat's Hiſt. of the Royal Society, p. 112.

B. He improves people's minds, and teaches them eloquence.

A. Suppoſe I ſhould invent ſome fantaſtic art, or imaginary language, that could not be of any uſe; could I ſerve the public by teaching ſuch a ſenſeleſs language, or filly art?

B. No: becauſe one cannot ſerve others as a maſter, unleſs he could teach them ſomething that is uſeful.

A. You cannot prove then that an orator ſerves the public, by his teaching eloquence, unleſs you could firſt ſhew that it is an uſeful art. of what uſe are a man's fine thoughts if they do not advance the public good? I am very ſenſible that they are advantagious to himſelf; for they dazle his hearers; who have ſo bad a taſte that they will applaud his skill, and even reward him for his uſeleſs talk. but ought you to ſuffer ſuch a mercenary fruitleſs eloquence in the government you have to model? a ſhoemaker is ſerviceable in his way, and maintains his family with what he gains by ſupplying other people's neceſſities. ſo that you ſee the moſt ordinary employments tend to ſome uſeful purpoſe: and there is no other art but the rhetorician's that ſerves only to amuſe people with talking. in fine, ſuch eloquence can only, on the one hand, ſatisfy the vain curioſity of the hearers, and encourage their idleneſs; and on the other, gratify the declaimer's pride and ambition. but for the honour of your republic, Sir, do not tolerate ſuch an abuſe.

B. I muſt grant that an orator's aim ſhould be to make people more wiſe and virtuous.

A. Do not forget this: you ſhall ſee the conſequences of it by and by.

B. Notwithſtanding this conceſſion, he who is employ'd in inſtructing others, may, at the ſame time, endeavour to acquire reputation and wealth, for himſelf.

A. I told you before, that we are not now handling the point as Chriſtians: I need only uſe philoſophy againſt you. let me put you in mind that you grant an orator is obliged to inſtruct others with a deſign to improve them in virtue. thus we get rid of all uſeleſs declaimers. we ought not even to ſuffer panegyriſts any farther than they render true wiſdom and probity more amiable by their praiſes; and propoſe models of virtue † and valour that are worthy of imitation.

B. What then, is a panegyric good for nothing, unleſs it be full of morality?

A. Have you not granted this already? inſtruction is the proper end of ſpeech: and the only good reaſon for praiſing any hero, is, that we may repreſent his worth to others, in order to excite their emulation;

† Perſpicuum eſt igitur alia eſſe in homine optanda, alia laudanda. genus, forma, vires, opes, divitiae, ceteraque quae fortuna det, aut extrinſecus, aut corpori, non habent in ſe veram laudem, quae deberi Virtuti uni putatur.--Virtus autem quae eſt per ſe ipſa laudabilis, et ſine qua nihil laudari poteſt, tamen habet plures partes, quarum alia eſt ad laudationem aptior. Cic. de Orat. lib. ii.

and to ſhew them that virtue and true glory are inſeparable. therefore a panegyric ſhould be kept free from all general, exceſſive, flattering praiſes; and ſuch barren thoughts as do not afford the leaſt inſtruction. every thing ſhould tend to make the hearers in love with what is truly great and good. but we find that moſt panegyriſts ſeem to magnify particular virtues, only that they may the more effectually praiſe thoſe that practiſed them, and ſet off their heroes to greater advantage. when they have any one to praiſe, they exalt his peculiar virtues far above all others. but every thing has its turn; and, on another occaſion, thoſe very qualities, which they preferred before, muſt now give place to ſome other virtues, that come in courſe to be extolled to the higheſt pitch. in this reſpect, I think Pliny is to be blamed. if he had praiſed Trajan, as a fit model for other heroes to copy after, this would have been a deſign worthy of an orator. but the praiſe of that prince (however deſerving he was) ought not to have been Pliny's chief aim. Trajan ſhould only have been propoſed to mankind as an imitable example, to allure them to virtue. when a panegyriſt has ſuch a mean view, as to praiſe the perſon, rather than the virtues that render him conſpicuous, this is only flattery addreſſed to pride.

B. What think you then of thoſe poems that were made in praiſe of antient heroes? Homer has his Achilles; and Virgil, his Aeneas. will you condemn theſe two poets?

A. By no means, Sir: do but examine the deſign of their works. in the Iliad, Achilles is the chief hero; but his praiſe is not the main end of the poem. his character is faithfully drawn with all its * defects: nay, theſe very defects are a part of that inſtruction which the poet deſigned to convey to poſterity. the † great deſign of this work was to inſpire the Greeks with the love of warlike glory; and a dread of diſcord, as the greateſt obſtacle to ſucceſs. this moral inſtruction is plainly interwoven throughout the poem. the Odyſſee indeed repreſents, in ‡ Ulyſſes, a hero more regular, and more accompliſhed: but this is ſtill natural. for, of courſe, a man like Ulyſſes, whoſe chief character is wiſdom, muſt be more wary, and uniform in his conduct, than ſuch a rough, warm, forward youth as Achilles. ſo that in drawing both theſe heroes, Homer

* Impiger, iracundus, inexorabilis, acer:
Jura negat ſibi nata: nihil non arrogat armis.
Hor. de A. P.

† Trojani belli ſcriptorem, maxime Lolli,
Dum tu declamas Romae, Praeneſte relegi:
Qui, quid ſit pulchrum, quid turpe, quid utile, quid non,
Plenius ac melius Chryſippo et Crantore dicit.
Fabula qua Paridis propter narratur amorem,
Stultorum regum et populorum continet aeſtus.
Hor. Epiſt. lib. i. Ep. 2.

‡ Rurſus quid virtus, et quid ſapientia poſſit,
Utile propoſuit nobis exemplar Ulyſſem.
Hor. Epiſt. lib. i. Ep. 2.

ſeems only to have copied nature. in fine, throughout the Odyſſee we find innumerable inſtructions for the whole conduct of life: and one cannot but obſerve that the poet's deſign, in deſcribing a prudent man, whoſe wiſdom makes him always ſucceſsful, was, to ſhew poſterity what good effects might be expected from prudent piety, and a regular life. Virgil, in his Aeneid, has imitated the Odyſſee in his * hero's character; and has drawn him brave, moderate, pious, and ſteddy. but it is evident that the praiſe of Aeneas was not the poet's principal aim. that hero was deſigned to repreſent the † Roman people, who deſcended from him: and Virgil meaned to ſhew them that their extraction was divine; that the gods had deſtined them to govern the world: and by this he animated them to the practice of ſuch heroic virtues as might ſupport the glory deſigned for them. now, a heathen could not poſſibly deviſe a nobler moral than this. the only fault of which Virgil can be ſuſpected, is his having had his private intereſt too much in view; and his turning his excellent poem to the ‡ praiſe of Auguſtus, and his family, with too great

* Rex erat Aeneas nobis, quo juſtior alter
Nec pietate fuit, nec bello major et armis.

† Nunc age, Dardaniam prolem quae deinde ſequatur
Gloria, qui maneant Itala de gente Nepotes,
Illuſtres animas, noſtrumque in nomen ituras,
Expediam dictis, et te tua fata docebo.

‡ Huc, geminas huc flecte acies; hanc aſpice gentem
Romanoſque tuos. hic Caeſar, et omnis Iuli

an air of flattery. but we ought not to criticize any author too ſeverely.

B. But will you not allow a poet, or an orator, to ſeek his fortune in an honourable way?

A. After this uſeful digreſſion concerning panegyrics, we now return to the difficulty you propoſed. the queſtion is, whether an orator ought to be intirely diſintereſted?

B. I do not think that he ought: for this would over-turn the moſt common maxims.

A. In your republic, would you not have orators obliged to the ſtricteſt rules of truth? do not you own that they ought never to ſpeak in public, but in order to inſtruct people, to reform their conduct, and ſtrengthen the laws?

B. Yes.

A. An orator then ſhould have nothing either to

Progenies magnum coeli ventura ſub axem.
Hic vir, hic eſt tibi quem promitti ſæpius audis
Auguſtus Cæſar, divi genus: aurea condet
Sæcula qui rurſus Latio, regnata per arva
Saturno quondam:——
Excudent alii ſpirantia mollius æra.
Credo equidem, vivos ducent de marmore vultus;
Orabunt cauſas melius: coelique meatus
Deſcribent radio; et ſurgentia ſidera dicent:
Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento:
Hæ tibi erunt artes; paciſque imponere morem;
Parcere ſubjectis, et debellare ſuperbos. Aeneid. lib. vi.

hope or fear from his hearers, with regard to his own intereſt. if you allowed of † ambitious mercenary declaimers, do you think they would oppoſe all the fooliſh unruly paſſions of men? if they themſelves be ſubject to avarice, ambition, luxury, and ſuch ſhameful diſorders, will they be able to cure others? if they ſeek after wealth; can they be fit to diſengage others from that mean purſuit? I grant, that a virtuous and diſintereſted orator ought always to be ſupplied with the conveniencies of life: nor can he ever want them, if he be a true philoſopher; I mean, ſuch a wiſe and worthy perſon as is fit to reform the manners of men: for then he will live after a plain, modeſt, frugal, laborious manner: he will have occaſion but for little: and that little he will never want; tho' he ſhould earn it with his own hands. now, what is ſuperfluous ought not to be offered him as the recompence of his public ſervices: and indeed it is not worthy of his acceptance. he may have honour and authority conferred on him: but if he be maſter of his paſſions, as we ſuppoſe, and above ſelfiſh views, he will uſe this authority only for the pu-

† Jam hoc quis non videt, maximam partem orationis in tractatu aequi bonique conſiſtere? dicetne de his ſecundum debitam rerum dignitatem malus atque iniquus? denique----demus id quod nullo modo fieri poteſt, idem ingenii, ſtudii, doctrinae, peſſimo, atque optimo viro, uter melior dicetur orator? nimirum qui homo quoque melior. non igitur unquam malus idem homo, et perfectus orator. Quint. lib. xii. c. 1.

blic good; and be ready to reſign it, when he can no longer enjoy it without flattery or diſſimulation. in ſhort, an orator cannot be fit to perſuade people, unleſs he be inflexibly upright: for, without this ſteddy virtue, his talents and addreſs, would, like a mortal poiſon, infect and deſtroy the body politic. for this reaſon, Cicero ‡ thought that virtue is the chief and moſt eſſential quality of an orator: and that he ſhould be a perſon of ſuch unſpotted probity as to be a pattern to his fellow-citizens: without which he cannot even ſeem to be convinced himſelf of what he ſays; and conſequently, he cannot perſuade others.

B. I am ſenſible there is a great deal of weight in what you ſay; but after all, may not a man fairly employ his talents to raiſe himſelf in the world?

‡ Eſt enim eloquentia una quaedam de ſummis virtutibus----quae quo major eſt vis, hoc eſt magis probitate jungenda, ſummaque prudentia; quarum virtutum expertibus ſi dicendi copiam tradiderimus, non eos quidem oratores effecerimus; ſed furentibus quaedam arma dederimus. De Orat. l. iii. §. 14.

Sit ergo nobis orator quem inſtituimus is, qui a M. Cicerone finitur, vir bonus dicendi peritus----Adde quod ne ſtudio quidem operis pulcherrimi vacare mens, niſi omnibus vitiis libera, poteſt----Quid putamus facturas cupiditatem, avaritiam, invidiam? quarum impotentiſſimae cogitationes, ſomnos etiam ipſos, et illa per quietem viſa, perturbent. Nihil eſt enim tam occupatum, tam multiforme, tot ac tam variis affectibus concifum atque laceratum, quam mala mens. Quint. lib. xii. cap. 1.

A. Let us look back always to the principles we laid down. we have agreed that eloquence, and the profeſſion of an orator, ſhould be devoted to the inſtruction of people, and the reformation of their practice. now, to do this with freedom and ſucceſs, a man muſt be diſintereſted; and muſt teach others to contemn death, and riches, and unmanly pleaſure. he muſt infuſe into their minds the love of moderation, frugality, a generous concern for the public good, and an inviolable regard to the laws and conſtitution: and the orator's zeal for all theſe muſt appear in his conduct, as well as in his diſcourſes. but will he who ſtrives to pleaſe others, that he may make his fortune; and who therefore avoids diſobliging any body; I ſay, will ſuch an artful ſelfiſh perſon inculcate unacceptable truths with boldneſs and authority? or, if he ſhould, will any one believe a man who does not ſeem to believe himſelf?

B. But ſuppoſing him to be in narrow circumſtances, he does no harm, I hope, by endeavouring to improve them.

A. If he be pinched, let him try to mend his condition ſome other way. there are other profeſſions that will eaſily ſet him above want. but if he be in ſuch extreme diſtreſs as to depend on relief from the public; he is not yet fit to be an orator. would you chuſe men that are indigent, and almoſt ſtarving, to be judges in your commonwealth? would you not be afraid that their wants might expoſe them to corruption; or be-

tray them into ſome diſhonourable compliance? would you not rather chuſe perſons of note and diſtinction who are above neceſſity, and out of the reach of its temptations?

B. I believe I ſhould.

A. For the ſame reaſon, if you wanted orators, that is, public maſters to inſtruct, reclaim, and form the minds and manners of the people, would you not chuſe ſuch men as wanted nothing, and are far above little ſelfiſh aims? and if there were others who had proper talents for this ſuperior office, but were clogged with their perſonal concerns, and narrow views of private intereſts; would you not excuſe them from ſhewing their eloquence till they were more eaſy and diſengaged in their circumſtances; and could ſpeak in public without being ſuſpected of any mean deſign?

B. It would be better. but does not the experience of our own age plainly ſhew, that an orator may make his fortune by preaching rigid virtue, with great vehemence? where can we find keener ſatires againſt the prevailing corruptions of the age, and ſeverer moral characters than thoſe which come from the pulpit? yet people are not diſturbed at them: nay they are pleaſed with them: and the ingenious preacher gets preferment by them.

A. It is very true: but moral inſtructions have no weight nor influence, when they are neither ſupported by clear principles, nor good examples. whom do you

ſee converted by them? people are accuſtomed to hear ſuch harangues: and are amuſed by them, as with ſo many fine ſcenes paſſing before their eyes. they hearken to ſuch lectures juſt as they would read a ſatire: and they look on the ſpeaker as one that acts his part well. they believe his † life, more than his talk: and when they know him to be ſelfiſh, ambitious, vain, gi-

† *The clergy have one great advantage beyond all the reſt of the world in this reſpect, beſides all* others, *that whereas the particular callings of other men prove to them great diſtractions, and lay many temptations in their way, to divert them from minding their* high *and* holy calling, *of being* Chriſtians; *it is quite otherwiſe with the clergy: the more they follow their* proper *callings, they do the more certainly advance their* general *one: the better* prieſts *they are, they become alſo the better* Chriſtians. *every part of their calling, when well performed, raiſes good thoughts, and brings good ideas into their minds; and tends both to encreaſe their knowledge, and quicken their ſenſe of divine matters. a prieſt therefore is more accountable to God, and the world for his deportment, and will be more ſeverely accounted with, than any other perſon whatſoever. he is more watched over and obſerved than all others. very* good men *will be, even to a cenſure, jealous of him: very* bad men *will wait for his halting, and inſult upon it: and all ſorts of perſons will be willing to defend themſelves againſt the authority of his doctrine and admonitions, by this,* he ſays, but does not——*the world will reverſe this quite, and conſider rather how a clerk* lives, *than what he* ſays. *they ſee the one; and from it conclude what he himſelf thinks of the other: and will think themſelves not a little juſtified, if they can ſay that they did no worſe than they ſaw their miniſter do before them. therefore a prieſt muſt not only abſtain*

ven up to ſloth and luxury; and ſee that he parts with none of thoſe enjoyments which he exhorts others to forſake; tho' for the ſake of cuſtom and ceremony, they hear him declaim; they believe and act as he does. but, what is worſt of all; people are too apt to conclude, that men of this profeſſion do not believe what they teach: this diſparages their function: and when others preach with a ſincere zeal; people will ſcarce believe this zeal to be ſincere.

B. I cannot but own that your notions hang well together; and that they are very convincing when one conſiders them attentively. but tell me freely, does not all you have ſaid on this ſubject flow from a pure zeal for Chriſtian piety?

A. No: if an unbeliever reaſon juſtly, he muſt fall into the ſame train of thoughts: but indeed one muſt have a Chriſtian ſpirit to act up to them: for it is grace

from groſs ſcandals; but keep at the fartheſt diſtance from them,---ſuch diverſions as his health or the temper of his mind, may render proper for him, ought to be manly, decent, and grave; and ſuch as may neither poſſeſs his mind or time too much, nor give a bad character of him to his people. he muſt alſo avoid too much familiarity with bad people; and the ſquandring away his time in too much vain and idle diſcourſe. his chearfulneſs ought to be frank; but neither exceſſive nor licentious. his friends, *and his* garden *ought to be his chief diverſions; as his* ſtudy, *and his* pariſh *ought to be his chief employments.*-------Bp. Burnet's diſc. of the paſtoral care, *Ch.* viii.

alone that can ſuppreſs the diſorderly emotions of ſelf-love. when I preſſed you with the authority of Socrates and Plato, you would not reſign your judgment to theirs: and now, ſince reaſon itſelf begins to convince you; and that I need not inforce the truth from authorities; what if I ſhould ſhew you after all, that I have only uſed their arguments on this ſubject.

B. Is it poſſible? I ſhould be very glad of it.

A. Well then: Plato introduces Socrates diſcourſing with Gorgias, a famous rhetorician, and Callicles, one of his diſciples. this Gorgias was Iſocrates' maſter; and (as Tully tells us,) he was the firſt man that boaſted of his being able to talk eloquently on every thing: in which ridiculous vanity he was afterwards imitated by other Greek declaimers. theſe two men, Gorgias and Callicles, harangued plauſibly enough on every ſubject; being wits that ſhone in converſation: and had no other buſineſs but to talk finely. however they wanted what † Socrates wiſhed every man to

† ---Inventi ſunt qui, cum ipſi doctrina, et ingeniis abundarent, a re autem civili et negotiis, animi quodam judicio abhorrerent, hanc dicendi exercitationem exagitarent, atque contemnerent. quorum princeps Socrates fuit, is qui omnium eruditorum teſtimonio, totiuſque judicio *Graeciae*, cum prudentia, et acumine, et venuſtate, et ſubtilitate, tum vero eloquentia, varietate, copia, quamcumque in partem dediſſet, *omnium* fuit facile princeps----cujus ingenium varioſque ſermones immortalitati ſcriptis ſuis Plato tradidit.-----

CICERO *de Orat.* lib. i. §. 16.

have; ſolid principles of morality, and a ſedate juſt way of reaſoning. Plato therefore having ſhewn what a ridiculous turn of mind theſe men had; he repreſents Socrates as diverting himſelf with their folly, and facetiouſly puzzling the two orators ſo much, that they could not tell him what eloquence is. then he proves that rhetoric, (which was the profeſſion of theſe declaimers) is not truly an art: for, according to him, 'an art is 'a regular diſcipline, which teaches men to do ſome-'thing that will help to make them wiſer, or better 'than they are.' ſo that he allows of no other arts but the liberal ones: and he ſhews that even theſe are perverted, when they are applied to any other end beſides training up men to virtue. he proves that this was not the aim of the rhetoricians: that even Themiſtocles and Pericles had quite other views; and that therefore they were not truly orators. he ſays thoſe famous men only perſuaded the Athenians to make harbours; and build walls; and obtain victories: they only made their citizens wealthy, warlike, and powerful; and were afterwards ill-treated for it: which was really no more than they might have expected. if they had rendered the people good and virtuous by their rhetoric, they would have been ſure of a juſt recompence: for, he who makes men upright, and good, cannot loſe the reward of his labour; ſeeing virtue, and ingratitude, are inconſiſtent. I need not tell you all the arguments he uſes to ſhew how uſeleſs ſuch falſe rhetoric is: for,

all that I have ſaid hitherto on this point, in my own name, is really taken from him. it will be more proper to repreſent to you what he ſays of the evils that theſe vain haranguers occaſion in the republic.

B. It is evident that ſuch rhetoricians were dangerous in the Grecian commonwealths, where they could miſlead the people; and uſurp the government.

A. That is the chief danger that Socrates apprehended from them. but the principles he lays down, on this occaſion, reach a great deal further. in fine, tho' you and I ſpeak now of ordering a commonwealth; our inquiry, and concluſions are not applicable to democracy alone; but to every kind of government, whether it be ſtrictly a republic, an ariſtocracy, or a monarchy. ſo that the particular form of government does not enter into the preſent queſtion. for in all countries, the rules of Socrates are equally uſeful.

C. I wiſh you would explain them to us.

A. He ſays that ſeeing a man is compoſed of a mind, and a body; he ought to improve them both. now there are two arts that concern the mind; and two others, that relate to the body. the two that belong to the mind, are moral philoſophy, and the knowledge of the national laws. under the head of moral philoſophy he comprehends the laws of nature and nations; and all thoſe dictates of philoſophy that are proper to govern the inclinations and manners of the whole republic, as well as of every individual member of it. he conſidered

the ſecond art, as a remedy that is to be uſed to ſuppreſs falſhood, injuſtice, and the like diſorders among the citizens: for, by it law-ſuits are determined; and crimes are puniſhed. ſo that moral philoſophy ſerves to prevent evil; and the knowledge of the laws and conſtitution, to puniſh it. there are likewiſe two arts for managing the body; the gymnaſtic art, which by due exerciſe and temperance, renders it healthy, active, vigorous, and graceful; (for, you know, Sir, the antients made a wonderful uſe of this art; which we have now quite loſt;) and the knowledge of phyſic which cures the body, when its health is loſt, or impaired. the gymnaſtic art aſſiſts the body, as moral philoſophy doth the ſoul; namely to form, and improve it: and skill in medicine is helpful to the body, as the knowledge of the laws is to the mind; for correcting and curing diſorders. but this wiſe inſtitution was altered, ſays Socrates: inſtead of a ſolid practical philoſophy, we have only the vain ſubtilty of wrangling ſophiſts: a ſet of ſpurious philoſophers who abuſe reaſon: and, having no ſenſe of public good, aim only at promoting their own ſelfiſh ends. inſtead of attaining a thorough inſight into the national laws, people are amuſed and miſled by vain-glorious oſtentation of theſe rhetoricians, who endeavour only to pleaſe and dazzle the mind: and inſtead of recommending the knowledge of the public conſtitution, and the adminiſtration of juſtice, (which being the medicine of the ſoul, ſhould be

applyed to cure its diſorderly paſſions,) theſe falſe orators think of nothing but how to ſpread their own reputation. and with regard to the body, (ſays Socrates) the gymnaſtic art begins to be exchanged for skill in dreſs; which gives the body but falſe deceitful ornaments. whereas we ought to deſire only ſuch a natural comelineſs as reſults from health of body, and due proportion of its members; which muſt be acquired and preſerved by temperance and exerciſe. the proper and ſeaſonable uſe of medicine is likewiſe laid aſide to make room for delicious diſhes, and ſuch palatable things as raiſe and enſnare the appetite. and inſtead of carrying off groſs humours from the body by proper evacuations, to reſtore its health; nature is clogged and overcharged; and a falſe appetite is excited by all the various ways of luxury and intemperance. he farther obſerves, that thoſe orators, who in order to cure men, ſhould have given them bitter phyſic, and with authority have inculcated the moſt diſagreeable truths; have on the contrary done for the mind, what cooks do for the body: their rhetoric is only an art of dreſſing up delicacies to gratify the corrupted taſte of the people. all their concern is to pleaſe and ſooth them, by raiſing their curioſity and admiration. for, theſe declaimers harangue only for themſelves. he concludes his remarks with asking, where are thoſe citizens whom the rhetoricians have cured of their vicious habits? whom have they made ſober and virtuous? thus Socrates deſcribes

the general diſorders, and corruption of manners that prevailed in his time. but does he not talk like † one of the preſent age, who obſerves what paſſes among us; and ſpeaks of the abuſes that reign in our own days? now you have heard the ſentiments of this wiſe heathen: what do you ſay of that eloquence which tends only to pleaſe, and give pretty deſcriptions; when (as he ſays) we ought to cauterize, and cut to the quick; and earneſtly endeavour to cure people's minds by the bitterneſs of remedies, and the ſeverity of an abſtemious diet? I appeal to your own judgment in this caſe: if you were ſick, would you be pleaſed with a phyſician, who in the extremity of your illneſs ſhould waſte his time, and amuſe you with explaining to you ſome fine hypotheſis in an elegant ſtile; inſtead of making perti-

†-- *The ornaments of ſpeaking-----are much degenerated from their original uſefulneſs. they were at firſt, no doubt, an admirable inſtrument in the hands of wiſe men, when they were only employed to deſcribe goodneſs, honeſty, obedience; in larger, fairer, and more moving images; to repreſent truth cloathed with bodies; and to bring knowledge back again to our very ſenſes, whence it was at firſt derived to our underſtanding. but* now *they are generally changed to worſe uſes: they make the* fancy *diſguſt the beſt things, if they come ſound and unadorned: they are in open defiance againſt reaſon; profeſſing not to hold much correſpondence with that; but with its ſlaves, the paſſions: they give the mind a motion too changeable and bewitching, to conſiſt with right practice.*---- Biſhop Sprat's hiſt. of the royal ſociety, p. 111, 112.

nent inquiries into the cauſe, and ſymptoms of your diſtempers; and preſcribing ſuitable remedies? or, in a trial at law, where your eſtate, or your life were at ſtake, what would you think of your lawyer, if he ſhould play the wit in your defence, and fill his pleading with flowers of rhetoric and quaint turns, inſtead of arguing with gravity, ſtrength of reaſon, and earneſtneſs, to gain your cauſe? our natural love of life, and well-being, ſhows us plainly the abſurdity of falſe oratory, and of the unſeaſonable oſtentation of it, in ſuch caſes as I have now mentioned: but we are ſo ſtrangely unconcerned about religion, and the moral conduct of life, that we do not obſerve the ſame ridicule in careleſs, vain-glorious orators; who yet ought to be the ſpiritual phyſicians and cenſors of the people. indeed the ſentiments of Socrates on this ſubject ought to make us aſhamed.

B. I perceive clearly enough that, according to your reaſoning, orators ought to be the defenders of the laws, and inſtructors of the people to teach them true wiſdom and virtue. but among the Romans the rhetoric of the bar was otherwiſe employed.

A. That was certainly the end of it. for, when orators had not occaſion to repreſent in their diſcourſes, the general wants of the republic: they were obliged to protect innocence, and the rights of particular perſons. and it was on this account that their profeſſion

was so much honoured; and that Tully gives us such a † lofty character of a true orator.

B. Let us hear then how orators ought to speak. I long to know your thoughts on this point: seeing you deny the finical, florid manner of Isocrates, which is so much admired and imitated by others.

A. Instead of giving you my own opinion, I shall go on to lay before you the rules that the antients give us: but I shall only touch upon the chief points: for, I suppose, you do not expect that I should enter into an endless detail of the precepts of rhetoric. there are but too many useless ones; which you must have read in those books where they are copiously explained. it will be enough if we consider the most important rules. Plato in his Phaedrus shews us, that the greatest fault

† Neque vero mihi quidquam praestabilius videtur, quam posse dicendo tenere hominum coetus, mentes allicere, voluntates compellere quo velit; unde autem velit, deducere. haec una res in omni libero populo, maximeque in pacatis tranquillisque civitatibus praecipue semper floruit, semperque dominata est. quid enim est aut tam admirabile, quam ex infinita multitudine hominum existere unum, qui id quod omnibus natura sit datum, vel solus, vel cum paucis facere possit?-----aut tam potens, tamque magnificum, quam populi motus, judicum religiones, senatus gravitatem, unius oratione converti?----ac ne plura, quae sunt pene innumerabilia, consecter, comprehendam brevi: sic enim statuo, perfecti oratoris moderatione, et sapientia, non solum ipsius dignitatem, sed et privatorum plurimorum, et universae reipublicae salutem maxime contineri-Cic. *de Orat, lib. i. §. 8.*

of rhetoricians is their ſtudying the art of perſuaſion, before they have learned, (from the principles of true philoſophy,) what thoſe things are of which they ought to perſuade men. he would have orators begin with the ſtudy of mankind in general; and then apply themſelves to the knowledge of the particular genius and manners of thoſe whom they may have occaſion to inſtruct and perſuade. ſo that they ought firſt of all to know the nature of man, his chief end, and his true intereſt; the parts of which he is compoſed, his mind, and his body; and the true way to make him happy: they ought likewiſe to underſtand his paſſions, the diſorders they are ſubject to, and the art of governing them; how they may be uſefully raiſed, and employed on what is truly good; and, in fine, the proper rules to make him live in peace, and become entirely ſociable. after this general ſtudy, comes that which is particular. orators ought to know the laws and cuſtoms of their country; and how far they are agreeable to the genius and temper of the people; what are the manners of the ſeveral ranks and conditions among them; their different ways of education; the common prejudices, and ſeparate intereſts that prevail in the preſent age; and the moſt proper way to inſtruct and reform the people. you ſee, Sir, this knowledge comprehends all the ſolid parts of philoſophy and politics. ſo that Plato meant to ſhew us, that none but a philoſopher can be a true orator. and it is in this ſenſe we muſt

underſtand all he ſays in his Gorgias, againſt the rhetoricians; I mean, that ſet of men who made profeſſion of talking finely, and perſuading others: without endeavouring to know, from ſolid philoſophy, what one ought to teach them. in ſhort, according to Plato, the true art of oratory conſiſts in underſtanding thoſe uſeful truths of which we ought to convince people; and the art of moving their paſſions, in order to perſuaſion. † Cicero ſays almoſt the very ſame things. he ſeems, at firſt, to think that an orator ſhould know every thing; becauſe that he may have occaſion to ſpeak on all ſorts of ſubjects; and (as Socrates obſerved before him) ‡ a man can never talk well on a point of which he is not intirely maſter. but afterwards, becauſe of the preſſing neceſſities and ſhortneſs of life, Tully inſiſts only upon thoſe parts of knowledge that he thinks the moſt neceſſary for an orator. he would have him at leaſt well

† Ac mea quidem ſententia nemo poterit eſſe omni laude cumulatus orator, niſi erit omnium rerum magnarum, atque artium ſcientiam conſecutus. *De Orat. lib.* 1. §. 6. oratorem plenum atque perfectum eſſe eum dicam, qui de omnibus rebus poſſit varie copioſeque dicere. *Ibid.* §. 13. verum enim oratori quae ſunt in hominum vita, quandoquidem in ea verſetur orator, atque ea eſt ei ſubjecta materies, omnia quaeſita, audita, lecta, diſputata, tractata, agitata eſſe debent. *Lib.* iii. §. 14.

‡ Etenim ex rerum cognitione efflorefcat, et redundet oportet oratio: quae, niſi ſubeſt res ab oratore perecepta, et cognita, inanem quandam habet elocutionem, et pene puerilem. *De Orat.* lib. i. §. 6.

inſtructed in all that part of * philoſophy which relates to the conduct and affairs of ſocial life. but above all things he would have an orator † know the frame of man, both with regard to his ſoul, and body, and the natural tendency and force of his paſſions; becauſe the great end of eloquence is to move the ſecret ſprings of them. he reckons the ‡ knowledge of the laws, and con-

* Poſitum ſit igitur in primis——ſine philoſophia non poſſe effici, quem quaerimus eloquentem——nec vero ſine philoſophorum diſciplina, genus, et ſpeciem cujuſque rei cernere, neque eam definiendo explicare, nec tribuere in partes poſſumus: nec judicare quae vera, quae falſa ſint; neque cernere conſequentia, repugnantia videre, ambigua diſtinguere. quid dicam de natura rerum cujus cognitio magnam orationis ſuppeditat copiam? de vita, de officiis, de virtute, de moribus? *Orat.* §. 4.

† Omnes animorum motus, quos hominum generi rerum natura tribuit, penitus pernoſcendi. ---*De Orat. lib.* i. §. 5. ----num admoveri poſſit oratio ad ſenſus animorum, atque motus vel inflammandos, vel etiam extinguendos (quod unum in oratore dominatur,) ſine *diligentiſſima perveſtigatione* earum omnium rationum quae de *naturis* humani generis, ac moribus, a philoſophis explicantur----*De Orat. lib.* i. §. 14. quare hic locus de vita et moribus, totus eſt oratori perdiſcendus. *Ibid.* §. 15.

‡ Bibliothecas mehercule omnium philoſophorum unus mihi videtur duodecim tabularum libellus, ſi quis *legum* fontes, et capita viderit, et auctoritatis pondere et utilitatis ubertate ſuperare. ac ſi nos, id quod maxime debet, noſtra patria delectat.-----cujus primum nobis mens, mos, diſciplina nota eſſe debet: vel quia eſt patria, parens omnium noſtrûm, vel quia tanta ſapientia

ſtitution, to be the foundation of all public diſcourſes: but he does not think a thorough inſight into all the particular caſes and queſtions in law to be neceſſary; becauſe, upon occaſion, one may have recourſe to experienced lawyers, whoſe peculiar profeſſion it is to underſtand and diſentangle ſuch intricate points. he thinks, with Plato, that an orator ſhould be a † maſter of reaſoning; and know how to define, and argue, and unravel the moſt ſpecious ſophiſms. he ſays we deſtroy eloquence, if we ſhould ſeparate it from philoſophy: for then, inſtead of wiſe orators, we ſhould have only trifling injudicious declaimers. he further requires not only an exact knowledge of all the principles of ethics; but likewiſe that the orator be fully acquainted with ‡ antiquity. he recommends the careful peruſal of the antient Greek writers, eſpecially the hiſtorians; both

ſuiſſe in jure conſtituendo putanda eſt, quanta fuit in his tantis operibus imperii comparandis. *De Orat. lib.* i. §. 44.

† Nec vero dialecticis modo ſit inſtructus, ſed habeat omnes philoſophiae notos, et tractatos locos. nihil enim de religione, nihil de morte, nihil de pietate, nihil de caritate patriae; nihil de bonis rebus, aut malis; nihil de virtutibus, aut vitiis---nihil, inquam, ſine ea ſcientia, quam dixi, graviter, ample, copioſe dici, et explicari poteſt. *Orat.* §. 33.

‡ Cognoſcat etiam rerum geſtarum et memoriae veteris ordinem, maxime ſcilicet noſtrae civitatis; ſed et imperioſorum populorum et regum illuſtrium---neſcire enim quid antea, quam natus ſis, acciderit, id eſt ſemper eſſe puerum---commemoratio autem antiquitatis, exemplorumque pro-

for their ſtile, and for the hiſtorical facts they relate. he particularly enjoins ‡ the ſtudy of the poets: becauſe of the great reſemblance there is betwixt the figures of poetry, and thoſe of eloquence. in fine, he often declares that an orator ought to furniſh his mind with a clear comprehenſive view of things, before he attempt to ſpeak in public. I fancy I could almoſt repeat ſome of his words on this ſubject; ſo often have I read them; and ſo ſtrong an impreſſion did they make on my thoughts. you will be ſurprized to ſee how much knowledge, and how many † qualities he requires. 'an 'orator, ſays he, ought to have the acuteneſs of logi-

latio ſumma cum delectatione, et auctoritatem orationi affert, et fidem. *Orat.* §. 34. ----apud Graecos autem eloquentiſſimi homines remoti a cauſis forenſibus, cum ad caeteras res illuſtres, tum ad ſcribendam hiſtoriam maxime ſe applicaverunt. namque et Herodotus---et poſt illum Thucydides omnes dicendi artificio mea ſententia facile vicit---denique etiam a philoſophia profectus princeps Xenophon ---*De Orat. lib.* ii. §. 13, 14.

‡ Legendi etiam poetae, cognoſcenda hiſtoria, omnium bonarum artium ſcriptores.---*De Orat. lib.* i. §. 34. eſt enim finitimus oratori poeta, numeris adſtrictior paulo, verborum autem licentia liberior; multis vero ornandi generibus ſocius ac pene par; in hoc quidem certe prope idem, nullis ut terminis circumſcribat aut definiat jus ſuum, quo minus ei liceat eadem illa facultate, et copia vagari qua velit.---*Ibid.* §. 16.

† Non quaeritur mobilitas linguae, non celeritas verborum, non denique ea quae nobis non poſſumus fingere, facies, vultus, ſonus. in oratore autem acumen dialecticorum,

'cians, the knowledge of philoſophers, the ſtile almoſt 'of the poets; the elocution and geſture of the fineſt 'actors.' conſider now how much application muſt be neceſſary to attain all this.

C. I have obſerved indeed, on ſeveral occaſions, that ſome orators, tho' they have good natural parts, want a fund of ſolid knowledge. their heads ſeem unfurniſhed: and one cannot but perceive they labour hard for matter to fill up their diſcourſes. they do not ſeem to ſpeak from the abundance of their hearts, as if they were full of uſeful truths: but they talk as if they were at a loſs for the very next thing they are to ſay.

A. Cicero takes notice of theſe kind of people; who live always, as it were, from hand to mouth, without laying up any ſtock of proviſion. but the diſcourſes of ſuch declaimers appear always thin and half-ſtarved, whatever pains they take about them. tho' theſe men could afford three months for ſtudying a public harangue, ſuch particular preparations, however troubleſome, muſt needs be very imperfect: and any judicious

ſententiae philoſophorum, verba prope poetarum, memoria juris conſultorum, vox tragoedorum, geſtus pene ſummorum actorum, eſt requirendus. quamobrem nihil in hominum genere rarius perfecto oratore inveniri poteſt: quae enim ſingularum rerum artifices, ſingula ſi mediocriter adepti ſunt, probantur, ea niſi omnia ſumma ſunt in oratore, probari non poſſunt.----*De Orat. lib.* i. §. 28.

hearer will eaſily diſcern their defects. they ought to have employed ſeveral years in laying up a plentiful ſtore of ſolid notions: and then after ſuch a general preparation, their particular diſcourſes would coſt them but little pains. whereas if a man, without this preparatory ſtudy, lay out all his application upon particular ſubjects, he is forced to put off his hearers with † florid expreſſions, gaudy metaphors, and jingling antitheſes. he delivers nothing but indeterminate common-place notions; and patches together ſhreds of learning and rhetoric which any one may ſee were not made one for another. he never goes to the bottom of things, but ſtops in ſuperficial remarks, and oft-times

† *There are two extremes to be avoided with the utmoſt care, the frigid ſtile, and the boyiſh. the former renders a diſcourſe dry and inſipid, by a languor and flatneſs of expreſſion: the latter renders it ungrateful and ſhocking, by a ſwelling loftineſs, and affected amplification- --thoſe who uſe the frigid ſtile, employ pompous expreſſions when the ſubject requires plain ones: and they who affect the boyiſh ſtile, make uſe of low expreſſions when the matter requires the loftieſt. but our language is become ſo modeſt, ſo reſerved, and ſo ſcrupulous, that the frigid ſtile includes all ſuch expreſſions as are too ſtrong, or too ſparkling; too bold and hardy metaphors, and frequent turns of wit. and the boyiſh ſtile comprehends ſtrokes of humour, and quaint conceits upon ſerious ſubjects; too looſe and heavy repetitions in thoſe parts of a diſcourſe that ought to be cloſe and conciſe; too violent exaggerations, and too laborious figures.*

Mr. Rapin. vol. ii. Reflexions ſur l'eloquence.

in falſe ones. he is not able to ſhew truths in their proper light, and full extent; becauſe all general truths are neceſſarily connected among themſelves: ſo that one muſt underſtand almoſt all of them, before he can treat judiciouſly of any one.

C. However many of our public ſpeakers get repute by thoſe ſlight attainments you ſo much deſpiſe.

A. It is true, they are applauded by women and the undiſcerning multitude, who are eaſily dazzled and impoſed on: but this repute is very precarious; and could not ſubſiſt long if it were not ſupported by a cabal of acquaintance, and the zeal or humour of a party. they who know the true end and † rules of eloquence, cannot hear ſuch empty vain haranguers without ſatiety, diſguſt, and contempt.

C. It ſeems then you would have a man wait ſeveral years before he attempt to ſpeak in public: for

† *Expreſſion is the dreſs of thought, and ſtill*
Appears more decent, as more ſuitable:
A low conceit in pompous words expreſt,
Is like a clown in regal purple dreſt.
For different ſtyles with different ſubjects ſort,
As ſeveral garbs with country, town, and court.
Some by old words to fame have made pretence:
Antients in phraſe, mere moderns in their ſenſe!
Such labour'd nothings, in ſo ſtrange a ſtyle,
Amaze th' unlearn'd, and make the learned ſmile.

Mr. Pope's eſſay on criticiſm.

the flower of his age muſt be ſpent in attaining that vaſt fund of knowledge you reckon neceſſary to an orator: and then he muſt be ſo far advanced in years, that he will have but little time to exert his talents.

A. I would have him begin to exert them betimes: for I know very well how great the power of action is. but under the pretence of exerciſing his parts, I would not have him immediately engage himſelf in any kind of employment that will take off his mind from his ſtudies. a youth may try his skill, from time to time: but for ſeveral years, a careful peruſal of the beſt authors ought to be his main buſineſs.

C. Your judicious obſervation puts me in mind of a preacher I am acquainted with: who lives, as you ſay, from hand to mouth; and never thinks of any ſubject till he be obliged to treat of it: and then he ſhuts himſelf up in his cloſet, turns over his concordance, Combefix and Polyanthea, his collections of ſermons; and common-place book of ſeparate ſentences and quotations that he has gathered together.

A. You cannot but perceive, Sir, that this method will never make him an able judicious preacher. in ſuch caſes, a man cannot talk with ſtrength and clearneſs: he is not ſure of any thing he ſays: nor doth any thing flow eaſily from him. his whole diſcourſe has a borrowed air; and looks like an aukward piece of patchwork. certainly thoſe are much to be blamed, who are ſo impatiently fond of ſhowing their parts.

B. Before you leave us, Sir, pray tell us what you reckon the chief effect of eloquence.

A. Plato ſays an oration is ſo far eloquent as it affects the hearer's mind. by this rule you may judge certainly of any diſcourſe you hear: if an harangue leave you cold and languid; and only amuſes your mind, inſtead of enlightening it; if it does not move your heart and paſſions, however florid and pompous it may be, it is not truly eloquent. Tully approves of Plato's ſentiments on this point; and tells us † that the whole drift and force of a diſcourſe ſhould tend to move thoſe ſecret ſprings of action that nature has placed in the hearts of men. would you then conſult your own mind to know whether thoſe you hear be truly eloquent? if they make a lively impreſſion upon you, and gain your attention and aſſent to what they ſay; if they move and animate your paſſions, ſo as to ‡ raiſe you above yourſelf, you may be aſſured they are true orators. but if inſtead of affecting you thus, they only pleaſe or divert you, and make you admire the brightneſs of their thoughts, or the beauty and propriety of their language, you may freely pronounce them to be mere declaimers.

B. Stay a little, Sir, if you pleaſe, till I ask you a few more queſtions.

† Lib. I. §. 5. lib. II. §. 82.

‡ See Longinus. §. vii.

A. I wiſh I could ſtay longer, gentlemen; for your converſation is very engaging: but I have an affair to diſpatch which will not admit of a delay. to-morrow I will wait on you again: and then we ſhall finiſh this ſubject at our leiſure.

B. Adieu, then, Sir, till to-morrow.

THE SECOND DIALOGUE.

B. YOU are extremely kind, Sir, in coming ſo punctually. your converſation yeſterday was ſo agreeably inſtructive, that we longed impatiently to hear you again upon the ſame ſubject.

C. For my part, I made what haſte I could, leſt I ſhould have come too late: for, I was unwilling to loſe any part of your diſcourſe.

A. Such conferences are very uſeful, among thoſe who really love truth, and talk with temper: for then they exchange their beſt thoughts, and expreſs them as clearly as they can. as for myſelf, gentlemen, I find an advantage in converſing with you; ſeeing you are not diſpleaſed at the freedom I take.

B. Let us leave off compliments, Sir; I know beſt how to judge of myſelf: and I perceive clearly that without your aſſiſtance I ſhould have continued in ſeveral errors. I intreat you, Sir, to go on, and ſet me intirely right in my notions of eloquence.

A. Your miſtakes, (if you will allow me to call them ſo,) prevail among moſt people of worth and learning who have not examined this matter to the bottom.

B. Let us not loſe time in preamble: we ſhall have a thouſand things to ſay. proceed therefore, Sir, to rectify my miſtakes; and begin at the point where we left off yeſterday.

A. Of what point were we talking, when we parted? I have really forgot.

C. You were ſpeaking of that kind of eloquence which conſiſts intirely in moving the paſſions.

B. Yes: but I could not well comprehend that the whole deſign of rhetoric is to move the paſſions. is that your opinion, Sir?

A. By no means.

C. It ſeems then I miſtook you yeſterday.

A. What would you ſay of a man who ſhould perſwade without any proof; and affect his hearers, without inlightening them? you could not reckon him a true orator. he might ſeduce people by this art of perſwading them to what he would, without ſhewing them that what he recommends is right. ſuch a perſon muſt prove very dangerous in the commonwealth: as we have ſeen before from the reaſoning of Socrates.

B. It is very true.

A. But on the other hand, what would you think of a man, who in his public diſcourſes ſhould demonſtrate the truth, in a plain, dry, exact, methodical manner; or make uſe of the geometrical way of reaſoning; without adding any thing to adorn or enliven his diſcourſe? would you reckon him an orator?

B. No: I ſhould think him a philoſopher only.

A. To make a compleat orator then, we muſt find a philoſopher who knows both how to demonſtrate any truth; and at the ſame time, to give his accurate rea-

ſoning all the natural beauty and vehemence of an agreeable, moving diſcourſe, to render it entirely eloquent. and herein lies the difference betwixt the clear convincing method of philoſophy; and the affecting, perſuaſive art of eloquence.

C. What do you ſay is the difference?

A. I ſay a philoſopher's aim is merely to demonſtrate the truth, and gain your aſſent; while the orator not only convinces your judgment, but commands your paſſions.

C. I do not take your meaning exactly yet. when a hearer is fully convinced, what is there more to be done?

A. There is ſtill wanting what an orator would do more than a metaphyſician, in proving the exiſtence of God. the metaphyſician would give you a plain demonſtration of it; and ſtop at the ſpeculative view of that important truth. but the orator would further add whatever is proper to excite the moſt affecting ſentiments in your mind; and make you love that glorious being whoſe exiſtence he had proved. and this is what we call perſwaſion.

C. Now I underſtand you perfectly well.

A. You ſee then what reaſon Cicero had to ſay, that we muſt never ſeparate philoſophy from eloquence. for, the art of perſuading without wiſdom, and previous inſtruction, muſt be pernicious: and wiſdom alone, without the art of perſuaſion, can never have a ſuffici-

ent influence on the minds of men; nor allure them to the love and practice of virtue. I thought it proper to observe this by the by, to shew you how much those of the last age were mistaken in their notions of this matter. for, on the one hand there were some men of polite learning, who valued nothing but the purity of languages, and books elegantly written; but having no solid principles of knowledge, with their politeness and erudition, they were generally Libertines. on the other hand, there were a set of dry, formal scholars, who delivered their instructions in such a perplext, dogmatical, unaffecting manner as disgusted every body. excuse this digression. I return now to the point; and must remind you that persuasion has this advantage beyond mere conviction, or demonstration; that it not only sets truth in the fullest light, but represents it as amiable; and engages men to love and pursue it. ‡ the whole art of eloquence therefore consists in enforcing the clearest proofs of any truth, with such powerful

‡---Omnes animorum motus, quos hominum generi rerum natura tribuit, penitus pernoscendi; quod omnis vis ratioque dicendi in eorum qui audiunt, mentibus aut sedandis, aut excitandis, exprimenda est. Cic. *de Orat. lib.* i. §. 5. Maximaque pars orationis admovenda est ad animorum motus nonnunquam aut cohortatione, aut commemoratione aliqua, aut in spem, aut in metum, aut ad cupiditatem, aut ad gloriam concitandos: saepe etiam a temeritate, iracundia, spe, injuria, credulitate revocandos. *Ibid. lib.* ii. §. 82.

motives as may affect the hearers, and employ their paſſions to juſt and worthy ends; to raiſe their indignation, at ingratitude; their horror, againſt cruelty: their compaſſion, for the miſerable; their love, of virtue: and to direct every other paſſion to its proper objects. this is what Plato calls affecting the minds of an audience; and moving their bowels. do you underſtand me, Sir?

B. Very plainly: and I ſee too that eloquence is not a trifling invention to amuſe and dazzle people with pompous language; but that it is a very ſerious art; and ſerviceable to morality.

A. It is both a ſerious and a difficult art. for which reaſon Tully ſaid he had heard ſeveral perſons declaim in an elegant engaging manner; but that there were but very few compleat orators, who knew how to ſeize, and captivate the heart.

C. I am not ſurprized at that: for I ſee but very few who aim at it: nay I freely own that Cicero himſelf who lays down this rule, ſeems oftentimes to forget it. what do you think of thoſe rhetorical flowers with which he embelliſheth his harangues? they might amuſe the fancy, but could not touch the heart.

A. We muſt diſtinguiſh, Sir, betwixt Tully's orations. thoſe he compoſed in his youth (when he chiefly aimed at eſtabliſhing his character,) have oft-times the gay defect you ſpeak of. he was then full of ambition; and far more concerned for his own fame, than for the

juſtice of his cauſe. and this will always be the caſe when people employ one to plead for them, who regards their buſineſs no farther than as it gives him an opportunity of diſtinguiſhing himſelf, and of ſhining in his profeſſion. thus we find that among the Romans their pleading at the bar, was oft-times nothing elſe but a pompous declamation. after all, we muſt own that Tully's † youthful and moſt elaborate orations ſhew a great

† Nunc cauſa perorata, res ipſa et periculi magnitudo, *C. Aquilli*, cogere videtur, ut te, atque eos, qui tibi in conſilio ſunt, obſecret, obteſteturque *P. Quintius* per ſeneſtutem ac ſolitudinem ſuam, nihil aliud, niſi ut veſtrae naturae, bonitatique obſequamini: ut, cum veritas haec faciat, plus hujus inopia poſſit ad miſericordiam quam illius opes ad crudelitatem-----ſi quae pudore ornamenta ſibi peperit, *Naevi*, ea poteſt contra petulantiam, te defendente, obtinere; ſpes eſt et hunc miſerum atque infelicem aliquando tandem poſſe conſiſtere. ſin et poterit *Naevius* id quod libet; et ei libebit, quod non licet; quid agendum eſt? qui Deus appellandus eſt? cujus hominis fides imploranda?------ab ipſo [*Naevio*] repudiatus, ab amicis ejus non ſublevatus; ab omni magiſtratu agitatus atque perterritus, quem praeter te appellet, [*C. Aquilli*] habet neminem: tibi ſe, tibi ſuas omnes opes fortunaſque commendat: tibi committit exiſtimationem ac ſpem reliquae vitae. multis vexatus contumeliis, plurimis jactatus injuriis non *turpis* ad te, ſed *miſer* confugit; e fundo ornatiſſimo dejectus, ignominiis omnibus appetitus----itaque te hoc obſecrat, *C. Aquilli*, ut quam exiſtimationem, quam honeſtatem injudicium tuum, prope acta jam aetate decurſaque attulit, eam liceat ei ſecum ex hoc loco efferre; ne is, de cujus officio nemo unquam du-

deal of his moving and perſuaſive art. but to form a juſt notion of it, we muſt obſerve the harangues he made in his more advanced age, for the neceſſities of the republic. for then, the experience he had in the weightieſt affairs, the love of liberty, and the fear of thoſe calamities that hung over his head, made him diſplay the utmoſt efforts of his eloquence. when he endeavoured to ſupport and revive expiring liberty, and to animate the commonwealth againſt Antony his enemy; you do not ſee him uſe points of wit and quaint antitheſes: he is then truly eloquent. every thing ſeems artleſs, as it ought to be when one is vehement. with a negligent air he delivers the moſt natural and affecting ſentiments; and ſays every thing that can move and animate the paſſions.

C. You have often ſpoke of witty conceits and quaint turns. pray, what do you mean by theſe expreſſions? for I can ſcarce diſtinguiſh thoſe witty turns from the other ornaments of diſcourſe. in my opinion, all the embelliſhments of ſpeech flow from wit; and a vigorous fancy.

A. But Tully thinks, there are many expreſſions that owe all their beauty and ornament to their force and

bitavit, ſexageſimo denique anno, dedecore, macula, turpiſſimaque ignominia notetur: ne ornamentis ejus omnibus, *Sex. Naevius* pro ſpoliis abutatur: ne per te ferat, quo minus, quae exiſtimatio *P. Quintium* uſque ad ſenectutem perduxit, eadem uſque ad rogum proſequatur. Cic. *Orat. pro P. Quintio.*

propriety; and to the nature of the ſubject they are applyed to.

C. I do not exactly underſtand theſe terms: be pleaſed to ſhew me in a familiar way, how I may readily diſtinguiſh betwixt a flaſh of wit, (or quaint turn,) and a ſolid ornament, or † noble delicate thought.

A. Reading, and obſervation will teach you beſt: there are a hundred different ſorts of witty conceits.

C. But pray, Sir, tell me at leaſt ſome general mark by which I may know them: is it affectation?

A. Not every kind of affectation: but a fond deſire to pleaſe, and ſhew one's wit.

C. This gives me ſome little light: but I want ſtill ſome diſtinguiſhing marks, to direct my judgment.

A. I will give you one then, which perhaps will ſatisfy you. we have ſeen that eloquence conſiſts not only in giving clear convincing proofs; but likewiſe in the art of moving the paſſions. now in order to move them, we muſt be able to paint them well; with their various objects, and effects. ſo that I think the whole

† *True wit is* nature *to advantage dreſs'd,*
What oft was thought, but ne'er ſo well expreſs'd;
Something, whoſe truth *convinc'd at ſight we find,*
That gives us back the image of our mind.
As ſhades more ſweetly recommend the light:
So modeſt plainneſs *ſets off* ſprightly wit.
For works may have more wit than does them good;
As bodies periſh through exceſs of blood.
Mr. Pope's eſſay on criticiſm. *p.* 23.

art of oratory may be reduced to proving, painting, and raiſing the paſſions. now all thoſe pretty, ſparkling, quaint thoughts that do not tend to one of theſe ends, are only witty conceits.

C. What do you mean by painting? I never heard that term applyed to rhetoric.

A. To * paint, is not only to deſcribe things; but to repreſent the circumſtances of them, in ſuch a † lively ſenſible manner, that the hearer ſhall fancy he almoſt ſees them with his eyes. for inſtance: if a dry hiſtorian were to give an account of Dido's death, he would only ſay; ſhe was overwhelmed with ſorrow after the departure of Aeneas; and that ſhe grew weary of her life: ſo ſhe went up to the top of her palace; and lying down on her funeral-pile, ſhe ſtabbed herſelf. now theſe words would inform you of the fact; but you do not ſee it. when you read the ſtory in ‡ Virgil, he ſets it

* See Longinus. §. xv.

† Plus eſt evidentia, vel ut alii dicunt, repraeſentatio, quam perſpicuitas: et illud quidem patet: haec ſe quodammodo oſtendit-----magna virtus eſt, res de quibus loquimur, clare atque ut *cerni videantur*, enunciare. non enim ſatis efficit, neque ut debet plene dominatur oratio, ſi uſque ad aures volet, atque ea ſibi judex de quibus cognoſcit, *narrari* credit, non *exprimi*, et *oculis* mentis *oſtendi*---atque hujus ſummae, judicio quidem meo, virtutis facillima eſt via. *naturam* intueamur, hanc *ſequamur*.----Quintil. *lib.* viii. *c.* 3.

‡ Talia dicentem jamdudum averſa tuetur,
Huc illuc volvens oculos, totumque pererrat
Luminibus tacitis, et ſic accenſa profatur:

before your eyes, when he repreſents all the circumſtances of Dido's deſpair; deſcribes her wild rage; and death already ſtaring in her aſpect; when he makes her ſpeak at the ſight of the picture and ſword that Aeneas

Heu! furiis incenſa feror——
Tum vero infelix fatis exterrita Dido,
Mortem orat: taedet coeli convexa tueri.
Ergo ubi concepit furias, evicta dolore,
Decrevitque mori; tempus ſecum ipſa modumque
Exigit——
At regina pyra, penetrali in ſede, ſub auras
Erecta ingenti, taedis atque ilice ſecta
Intenditque locum ſertis, et fronde coronat
Funera: ſuper exuvias, enſemque relictum,
Effigiemque toro locat----et crines effuſa ſacerdos
Tercentum tonat ore Deos——
Ipſa mola, manibuſque piis, altaria juxta
Unum exuta pedem vinclis, in veſte recincta
Teſtatur moritura Deos, et conſcia fati
Sidera: tum, ſi quod non aequo foedere amantes
Curae numen habet, juſtumque memorque precatur.
Nox erat: et placidum carpebant feſſa ſoporem
Corpora per terras; ſilvaeque et ſaeva quierant
Aequora: cum medio volvuntur ſidera lapſu:
Cum tacet omnis ager; pecudes, pictaeque volucres,
Quaeque lacus late liquidos, quaeque aſpera dumis
Rura tenent, ſomno poſitae ſub nocte ſilenti
Lenibant curas, et corda oblita laborum.
At non infelix animi Phoeniſſa; neque unquam
Solvitur in ſomnos, oculiſve aut pectore noctem
Accipit: ingeminant curae, rurſuſque reſurgens
Saevit amor, magnoque irarum fluctuat aeſtu.——

left, your imagination tranſports you to Carthage; where you ſee the † Trojan fleet leaving the ſhore, and the queen quite inconſolable. you enter into all her paſſions, and into the ſentiments of the ſuppoſed ſpectators. it is not Virgil you then hear: you are too attentive to the ‡ laſt words of unhappy Dido, to think

† Et jam prima novo ſpargebat lumine terras
Tithoni croceum linquens aurora cubile:
Regina e ſpeculis ut primum albeſcere lucem
Vidit, et aequatis claſſem procedere velis;
Littoraque, et vacuos ſenſit ſine remige portus;
Terque quaterque manu pectus percuſſa decorum,
Flaventeſque abſciſſa comas: prô *Jupiter* ibit
Hic, ait, et noſtris illuſerit advena regnis?
Non arma expedient? totaque ex urbe ſequentur?
Diripientque rates alii navalibus? ite,
Ferte citi flammas, date vela, impellite remos.
Quid loquor? aut ubi ſum? quae mentem inſania mutat?
Infelix *Dido!* num te facta impia tangunt?
Haec ait: et partes animum verſabat in omnes,
Inviſam quaerens quamprimum abrumpere lucem.
‡ At trepida, et coeptis immanibus effera *Dido*
Sanguineam volvens aciem, maculiſque trementes
Interfuſa genas, et pallida morte futura,
Interiora domus irrumpit limina, et altos
Conſcendit furibunda rogos, enſemque recludit
Dardanium; non hos quaeſitum munus in uſus.
Hic poſtquam Iliacas veſtes, notumque cubile
Conſpexit, paulum lachrymis, et mente morata
Incubuitque toro, dixitque noviſſima verba:
Dulces exuviae! dum fata deuſque ſinebant,
Accipite hanc animam, meque his exſolvite curis.

of him. the poet diſappears: and we ſee only what he deſcribes; and hear thoſe only whom he makes to ſpeak. ſuch is the force of a natural imitation, and of painting in language. hence it comes that the painters and the poets are ſo nearly related; the one paints for the eyes; and the other for the ears: but both of them ought to convey the livelieſt pictures to people's imagination. I have taken an example from a poet to give

Vixi, et quem dederat curſum fortuna peregi:
Dixit: et os impreſſa toro, moriemur inultae?
Sed moriamur, ait. ſic, ſic juvat ire ſub umbras.
Hauriat hunc oculis ignem crudelis ab alto
Dardanus, et noſtrae ſecum ferat omina mortis.
Dixerat: atque illam media inter talia ferro
Collapſam aſpiciunt comites, enſemque cruore
Spumantem, ſparſaſque manus. it clamor ad alta
Atria: concuſſam bacchatur fama per urbem
Lamentis gemituque, et femineo ululatu
Teſta fremunt: reſonat magnis plangoribus aether.
Audiit exanimis, trepidoque exterrita curſu
Unguibus ora ſoror foedans, et peſtora pugnis
Per medios ruit, ac morientem nomine clamat.
———Sic fata, gradus evaſerat altos,
Semianimemque, ſinu germanam amplexa fovebat
Cum gemitu, atque atros ſiccabat veſte cruores.
Illa graves oculos conata attollere, rurſus
Deficit: infixum ſtridet ſub peſtore vulnus.
Ter ſeſe attollens, cubitoque adnixa levavit:
Ter revoluto toro eſt; oculiſque errantibus, alto
Quaeſivit coelo lucem, ingemuitque reperta.

Virg. *Aeneid. lib.* iv.

you a livelier image of what I mean by painting in eloquence: for poets paint in a ſtronger manner than orators. indeed the main thing in which poetry differs from eloquence is, that the poet paints with enthuſiaſm, and gives bolder touches than the orator. but proſe allows of painting in a moderate degree: for, without lively deſcriptions it is impoſſible to warm the hearer's fancy, or to ſtir his paſſions. a plain narrative does not move people: we muſt not only inform them of facts; but † ſtrike their ſenſes, by a lively moving repreſentation of the manner and circumſtances of the facts we relate.

C. I never reflected on this before. but ſeeing what you call painting is eſſential to oratory; does it not follow that there can be no true eloquence, without a due mixture of poetry?

† Τῆς δὲ ῥητορικῆς φαντασίας κάλλιστον ἀεὶ τὸ ἔμπρακτον ϗ ἐνάληθες. ---καλεῖται μὲν γὰρ κοινῶς φαντασία, πᾶν ἐννόημα λόγῳ γιγνητικὸν ὁπωσοῦν παρισάμενον· ἰδίως δ' ἐπὶ τούτων κεκράτηκε τοὔνομα, ὅταν ἃ λέγῃς ὑπὸ ἐνθουσιασμῶ ϗ πάθους βλέπειν δόκῃς, ϗ ὑπ' ὄψιν τιθῇς τοῖς ἀκούουσιν——Τί οὖν ἡ ῥητορικὴ φαντασία δύναται; πολλὰ μὲν ἴσως καὶ ἄλλα τοῖς λόγοις ἐναγώνια ϗ ἐμπαθῆ προσεισφέρειν· καλλιγραμένη μέντοι ταῖς πραγματικαῖς ἐπιχειρήσεσιν, ὑ πείθει τὸν ἀκροατὴν μόνον, ἀλλὰ ϗ δουλοῦται. Longinus, §. xv.

A. You are right: only we muſt exclude verſification; that is, a ſtrict regard to the quantity of ſyllables, and the order of words in which the poet is obliged to expreſs his thoughts, according to the meaſure or verſe he writes in. verſification indeed, if it be in rhime, is what injudicious people reckon to be the whole of poetry. ſome fancy themſelves to be poets, becauſe they have ſpoken or writ in meaſured words: but there are many who make verſes, without poetry: and others are very † poetical without making verſes. if therefore we ſet verſifying aſide, poetry in other reſpects is only a lively fiction that paints nature. and if one has not this genius for painting, he will never be able to imprint things on the hearer's mind: but his diſcourſe will be flat, languid, and wearyſome. ever ſince the fall of Adam, men's thoughts have been ſo low and grovelling, that they are un-

† *The* adventures *of* Telemachus, *compoſed by our ingenious author, are intirely written in that poetic proſe he here ſpeaks of.* M. Boſſu *the greateſt modern critic, does not think that work can be called a poem; but he owns the diſtinction that our author here takes notice of.* ' *there is good reaſon (ſays he)* ' *to diſtinguiſh ſuch artleſs compoſures (turned into verſe)* ' *from true poetry, by giving* ' *them the name of verſification; and to make of* verſification, *and* poetry, *as it were* ' *two different arts. and indeed,* ' *is there a greater difference* ' *betwixt grammar, and rhetoric; than betwixt the art of* ' *making verſes, and that of inventing a poem?*' Traité du poeme epique. *liv.* i. *ch.* 5.

attentive to moral truths; and can ſcarce conceive any thing but what affects their ſenſes. in this conſiſts the degeneracy of human nature. people grow ſoon weary of contemplation: intellectual ideas do not ſtrike their imagination: ſo that we muſt uſe ſenſible and ‡ familiar images to ſupport their attention, and convey abſtracted truths to their minds. hence it came, that ſoon after the fall, the religion of all the antients conſiſted of poetry and idolatry; which were always joined together in their various ſchemes of ſuperſtition. but let us not wander too far-----you ſee plainly that poetry, I mean, the lively painting of things, is, as it were, the very ſoul of eloquence.

C. But if true orators be poets; I ſhould think that poets are orators too: for poetry is very proper to perſuade.

A. Yes; they have the very ſame end. all the difference betwixt them conſiſts in what I have told you. orators are not poſſeſt with that enthuſiaſm which fires the poet's breaſt, and renders him more lively, more ſublime, and bolder in expreſſion. you remember the paſſage I quoted from Cicero.

C. Which? is it not----

A. That an orator ought to have the ſtile almoſt of

‡ Reſpicere exemplar vitae morumque jubebo
Doctum imitatorem, et veras hinc ducere voces.
HOR. *de A. P.*

a poet: that almoſt points out the difference between them.

C. I underſtand you. but you do not come to the point you propoſed to explain to us.

A. Which?

C. The rule for diſtinguiſhing betwixt witty turns, and ſolid ornaments.

A. You will ſoon comprehend that. for of what uſe in diſcourſe can any ornament be, that does not tend either to prove, to paint, or to affect?

C. It may ſerve to pleaſe.

A. We muſt diſtinguiſh here between ſuch ornaments as only pleaſe; and thoſe that both pleaſe, and perſuade. that which ſerves to pleaſe in order to perſuade, is good and ſolid: thus we are pleaſed with ſtrong and clear arguments. the juſt and natural emotions of an orator have much grace and beauty in them: and his exact and lively painting charms us. ſo that all the neceſſary parts of eloquence are apt to pleaſe: but yet pleaſing is not their true aim. the queſtion is, whether we ſhall approve ſuch thoughts and expreſſions as may perhaps give an amuſing delight; but in other reſpects, are altogether uſeleſs: and theſe I call quaint turns, and points of wit. you muſt remember now that I allow of all thoſe graces of ſtile, and delicate thoughts that tend to perſuaſion: I only reject thoſe vain affected ornaments that the ſelf-conceited author uſes, to paint his own character, and amuſe others with his wit;

inſtead of filling their minds entirely with his ſubject. in fine; I think we ought to condemn not only all jingle and playing with words, as a thing extremely mean and boyiſh; but even all witty conceits, and fanciful turns; I mean, ſuch thoughts as only flaſh and glitter upon the fancy; but contain nothing that is ſolid, and conducive to perſuaſion.

C. I could agree to that; but that I am afraid ſuch ſeverity would retrench the chief beauties of diſcourſe.

A. Do not you reckon Homer and Virgil very agreeable authors? are they not the moſt delicate you ever read? and yet in them you do not find what we call points of wit. their poems are full of a noble ſimplicity: their art is entirely concealed: † nature itſelf appears in all that they ſay. we do not find a ſingle word that ſeems purpoſely deſigned to ſhew the poet's wit. ‡ they thought it their greateſt glory never to ap-

† *When firſt young* Maro *ſung of kings and wars,*
'Ere warning Phoebus *touch't his trembling ears,*
Perhaps he ſeem'd above the critic's law,
And but from nature's fountains ſcorn'd to draw:
But when t' examine every part he came,
Nature *and* Homer, *were, he found, the ſame.*
Learn hence for antient rules a juſt eſteem;
To copy nature is to copy them.

Mr. Pope's eſſay on criticiſm. *p.* 13.

‡ Καὶ μοὶ εἰπέ· ἐπίσασαι τῆς Ιλιάδος τὰ πρῶτα, ἐν οἷς ὁ ποιητὴς φησὶ τὸν μὲν Χρύσην δεῖσθαι τῷ Αγαμέμνονος ἀπολῦσαι τὴν θυγατέρα,

pear; but to employ our attention on the objects they deſcribe: as a painter endeavours to ſet before your eyes wide foreſts, mountains, rivers, diſtant views, and buildings; or the adventures, actions, and different paſſions of men, in ſuch a lively manner, that you cannot trace the maſterly ſtrokes of his pencil: for art looks mean and coarſe when it is perceived. Plato (who had examined this matter more thoroughly than any other orator, or critic,) aſſures us that in compoſing, the † poet ſhould always keep out of ſight, make himſelf be quite forgot by his readers, and repreſent only thoſe things and perſons which he would ſet before

τὸν δὲ χαλεπαίνειν------ εἰσθ' ὅτι μέχρι μὲν τύτων τῶν ἐπῶν,

—ἠ ἐλίσσετο πάντας Ἀχαιὺς,

Ατρεΐδα δὲ μάλιϛα, δύω κοσμήτορε λαῶν------

λέγει τε αὐτὸς ὁ ποιηΐης, ἠ ὑδ' ἐπιχειρεῖ ἡμῶν τὴν διάνοιαν ἄλλοσε τρέπειν ὡς ἄλλός τις ὁ λέγων ἢ αὐτός· τὰ δὲ μεΐα ταῦτα, ὥσπερ αὐτὸς ὢν ὁ Χρύσης λέγει, καὶ πειρᾶται ἡμᾶς ὅτι μάλιϛα ποιῆσαι μὴ Ομηρον δοκεῖν εἶναι τὸν λέγοντα, ἀλλὰ τὸν ἱερέα πρεσβύτην ὅλα· καὶ τὴν ἄλλην δὲ πᾶσαν σχεδόν τι ὕτω πεποίηται διήγησιν περί τε τῶν ἐν Ιλίῳ καὶ περὶ τῶν ἐν Ιθάκῃ ἠ ὅλῃ Οδυσσείᾳ παθημάτων.

Plato de Repub. lib. iii.

† Εἰ δέ γε μηδαμῦ ἑαυτὸν ἀποκρύπτοιτο ὁ ποιηΐης, πᾶσα ἂν αὐτῷ ἄνευ μιμήσεως ἡ ποίησίς τε ἠ ἡ διήγησις γεγονῦια εἴη.

Ibid.

their eyes. you ſee how much the ancients excelled us in juſt and lofty ſentiments.

B. I ſee the uſe and neceſſity of painting, in eloquence: let us next know the nature and uſe of thoſe affecting movements you ſpoke of.

A. They ſerve to raiſe in the hearer's mind, ſuch emotions as anſwer the orator's purpoſe.

C. But in what do theſe movements of an orator conſiſt?

A. In his words, and in the actions of his body.

B. What movement can there be in words?

A. A great deal. Tully tells us, that the very enemies of Graccbus could not forbear weeping when ‡ he pronounced theſe words--- 'miſerable man that I am! 'whither ſhall I turn myſelf? where can I go? to the 'Capitol? it ſwims with my brother's blood. ſhall I 'go to my own houſe? there to ſee my unhappy mo-'ther diſſolved in tears, and oppreſſed with ſorrow?' this is moving language. but now if one were to ſay the

‡ Quid fuit in *Graccho*, quem tu, *Catule*, melius meminiſti, quod me puero tantopere ferretur? *quo me miſer conferam? quo vertam? in Capitoliumne? at fratris ſanguine redundat. an domum? matremne ut miſeram lamentantemque videam, et abjectam?* quae ſic ab illo *acta* eſſe conſtabat oculis, voce, geſtu, inimici ut lachrymas tenere non poſſent. haec eo dico pluribus, quod genus hoc totum oratores, qui ſunt veritatis ipſius *actores*, reliquerunt; imitatores autem veritatis, hiſtriones, occupaverunt. Cic. *de Orat. lib.* iii. §. 56.

ſame things in a cold manner, they would loſe all their force.

B. Think you ſo?

A. Let us try. 'I know not where to go, nor 'whither I ſhould turn myſelf, amidſt my misfortunes. 'the Capitol is the place where my brother's blood 'was ſhed: and at home, I ſhall ſee my unhappy mo-'ther lamenting her condition, with the utmoſt grief.' this is the ſame thing that was ſaid before: but what is become of that force and vivacity we then perceived? where is that † vehement manner, and abrupt language which ſo juſtly deſcribes nature in the tranſports of grief? the manner of ſaying a thing ſhews us how it affects the mind: and that is what moſt effectually touches the hearer. in ſuch paſſages, one ought ſtudiouſly to avoid all refined uncommon thoughts; and even neglect connection and order: otherwiſe the paſſion deſcribed has no appearance of truth, or nature, in it. nothing is more ſhocking than a paſſion expreſſed in beautiful figures, pompous language, and well turned periods. on this head I muſt recommend ‡ Longinus to you, who quotes many ſublime examples from Demoſthenes, and others.

C. Beſides the movements that attend an affecting vehement ſtile, you mentioned others that flow from the orator's geſture, and action: which I muſt entreat you to explain.

† *See Longinus.* §. xviii. ‡ *See* §. xviii, xix, xx, xxi.

A. I cannot pretend to give you a compleat ſyſtem of rhetoric. it is a task I am not fit for. however I ſhall give you ſome remarks I have made on the point of geſture. we find in Tully and † Quintilian that the action of the Greeks and Romans was far more violent than ours. they ſtampt on the ground; and even beat their forehead. Tully mentions an orator who in his pleading laid hold of his client, and tore open his cloaths, to ſhew the judges the wounds he had received in the ſervice of the republic. this was a vehement kind of action indeed; but ſuch as is reſerved for extraordinary occaſions; and doth not fall within the common rules of geſture. I think it is not natural to be always moving one's arm in talking: that ‡ motion is proper enough when the orator is very vehement: but he ought not to move his arm in order to appear vehement. nay there are many things that ought to be pronounced calmly, and without any motion.

B. Would you have a preacher, for inſtance, uſe no geſture at all on ſome occaſions? that would look very ſtrange indeed.

† Femur ferire, quod *Athenis* primus feciſſe creditur *Cleon*, et uſitatum eſt, et indignatos decet, et excitat auditorem. idque in *Callidio* Cicero deſiderat. *non frons*, inquit, *percuſſa? non femur? pedum nulla ſupploſio?* Quint. *lib.* xi. *c.* 3.

‡ Brachii moderata projectio remiſſis humeris, atque explicantibus ſe in proferenda manu digitis, continuos et decurrentes locos maxime decet. *Ibid.*

A. I know that moſt people lay it down for a rule, (or a cuſtom at leaſt,) that a preacher ſhould be always in motion, whatever the ſubject be that he treats of. but it might be eaſily ſhewn that our [French] preachers uſually have too much geſture, and ſometimes too little.

B. I wiſh you would ſtate this matter clearly. for, I always believed, from the example of *** that there are not above two or three motions of the hands to be uſed in a whole ſermon.

A. Let us then lay down ſome principle to argue upon. now of what uſe is the † action of the body in ſpeaking? is it not to expreſs the ſentiments and paſſions of the mind?

B. I think ſo.

A. The motion of the body then ſhould help to paint the thoughts of the ſoul.

B. Yes.

† Actio inquam in dicendo una dominatur: ſine hac ſummus orator eſſe in numero nullo poteſt: mediocris, hac inſtructus ſummos ſaepe ſuperare. huic primas dediſſe Demoſthenes dicitur, quum rogaretur quid in dicendo eſſet primum; huic ſecundas; huic tertias. *De Orat. lib.* iii. §. 56. eſt enim *actio* quaſi *fermo corporis*; quo magis menti congrua eſſe debet——atque in iis omnibus quae ſunt actionis, ineſt quaedam vis a natura data: quare etiam hac imperiti, hac vulgus, hac denique barbari maxime commoventur——iiſdem enim omnium animi motibus concitantur, et eos iiſdem notis, et in aliis agnoſcunt, et in ſe ipſi indicant. *Ibid.* §. 54.

A. And that painting ought to be exact and † faithful. every look and motion ſhould in an eaſy natural manner repreſent the ſpeaker's ſentiments, and the nature of the things he ſays; but ſo as to avoid all mean and theatrical geſtures.

B. I think I underſtand your notion exactly. let me interrupt you then a little; that you may ſee how far I enter into the conſequences that flow from the principle you laid down. you ‡ would have an orator uſe ſuch a lively, natural, becoming action, as will help to point out diſtinctly what his words alone could expreſs only in a flat and languid manner. ſo that you reckon his very action a ſort of painting.

A. Right. but we muſt farther conclude that to paint well, we muſt imitate nature; and obſerve what ſhe does when ſhe is left to herſelf; and is not conſtrained by art.

† Omnis enim motus animi ſuum quendam a natura habet vultum et ſonum, et geſtum: totumque corpus hominis, et ejus omnis vultus omneſque voces, ut nervi in fidibus, ita ſonant, ut a motu animi quoque ſint pulſae. Cicero *de Orat. lib.* iii. §. 57.

‡ Geſtus quantum habeat in oratore momenti, ſatis vel ex eo patet quod pleraque etiam citra verba ſignificat. quippe non manus ſolum, ſed nutus etiam declarant noſtram voluntatem; et in mutis pro ſermone ſunt----contra ſi geſtus ac vultus ab oratione diſſentiat, triſtia dicamus hilares, affirmemus aliqua renuentes, non auctoritas modo verbis, ſed etiam fides deſit.

Quint. *lib.* xi. *c.* 3.

B. That is plain.

A. Now doth a man naturally uſe many geſtures when he ſays common things, without vehemence, or the leaſt mixture of any ſort of paſſion?

B. No.

A. On ſuch common ſubjects then, we ought not to uſe any action in public diſcourſes; or at leaſt but little: for there we ought always to † follow nature; nay there are ſome occaſions where an orator might beſt expreſs his thoughts by ſilence. for, if, being full of ſome great ſentiment, he continued immoveable for a moment; this ſurprizing pauſe would keep the minds of the audience in ſuſpence, and expreſs an emotion too big for words to utter.

B. I doubt not but ſuch unexpected pauſes ſeaſonably employed, would be very ſignificant; and powerfully affect the hearers. but, Sir, you ſeem to think that one who ſpeaks in public ought to uſe no other action than what is proper for ordinary converſation.

A. You miſtake me, Sir: I think the ſight of a great aſſembly, and the importance of the ſubject an orator

† Unum jam his adjiciendum eſt, cum praecipue in actione ſpectetur *decorum*, ſaepe aliud alios decere. eſt enim latens quaedam in hoc ratio, et inenarrabilis: et ut vere hoc dictum eſt, caput eſſe artis, decere quod facias----quare norit ſe quiſque; nec tantum ex communibus praeceptis, ſed etiam ex natura ſua capiat conſilium formandae actionis.

Quint. *lib.* xi. *c.* 3.

treats of, ought to animate him far more than if he were talking familiarly with his friends. but both in private, and in public, he ought always to act naturally. he ſhould uſe ſome action when his words are moving: but when his expreſſions are quite calm and ſimple, there is no occaſion to move the body; except it be in the gentleſt manner. nothing appears more ſhocking and abſurd, than to ſee a man very warm and active, when he is ſaying the drieſt, coldeſt things. tho' he ſweats himſelf, he chills the blood of his audience. ſome time ago, I happened to fall aſleep at a ſermon; as you know one is apt to do in the afternoon: (and indeed in former times, they preached but once a-day, after the goſpel in the morning ſervice:) but I ſoon waked and found the preacher in a very violent agitation: ſo that I fancyed, at firſt, that he was preſſing ſome important point of morality----

B. What was the matter then?

A. He was only giving notice that on the Sunday following he would preach upon repentance. I was extremely ſurprized to hear ſuch an indifferent thing uttered with ſo much vehemence; and muſt have laughed out, if the regard I had for the place, and ſome other circumſtances had not reſtrained me. the pronunciation of theſe declaimers is exactly like their geſture: for, as their voice is a perpetual monotony; ſo there is an ‡

‡ *In the delivering of ſermons, a great compoſure of geſture and behaviour is neceſſary to give them weight and au-*

uniformity in their geſture that is no leſs nauſeous, and unnatural; and equally contrary to the good effect that one might expect from decent action.

B. You ſaid that ſometimes they have not action enough.

A. We cannot wonder at that. for they do not diſcern the things that require warmth and earneſtneſs. they waſte their ſpirits in ſaying the plaineſt things; and ſo are forced to utter thoſe things faintly which ought to be delivered with a vehement action. I muſt own indeed that the French are not very capable of this vehemence: for, they are too airy, and do not

thority. extremes are bad here, as in every thing elſe. ſome affect a light and ſlippant behaviour: and others think that wry faces, and a tone in the voice will ſet-off the matter. grave and compoſed looks, and a natural, but diſtinct pronunciation, will always have the beſt effects. the great rule which the maſters of rhetoric preſs much, can never be enough remembered, that to make a man ſpeak well, and pronounce with a right emphaſis, *he ought thoroughly to underſtand all that he ſays; be fully perſuaded of it; and bring himſelf to have thoſe affections which he deſires to infuſe into others. he that is perſuaded of the truth of what he ſays, and has a concern about it in his mind, will pronounce with a natural vehemence that is far more lively than all the ſtrains that art can lead him to. an orator, (if we hearken to them) muſt be an honeſt man, and ſpeak always on the ſide of truth; and ſtudy to feel all that he ſays; and then he will ſpeak it ſo as to make others feel it likewiſe.*

Diſcourſe of the paſtoral care, *ch.* ix.

conceive things with ſufficient ſtrength: and therefore they do not ſpeak with a proper energy. the Romans had a wonderful talent this way, and the Greeks a greater. the eaſtern nations excelled in it; and particularly the Hebrews. nothing can equal the ſtrength and vivacity of the figures they employed in their diſcourſe; and the very actions they uſed to expreſs their ſentiments; ſuch as putting aſhes on their heads, and tearing their garments, and covering themſelves with ſackcloath, under any deep diſtreſs and ſorrow of mind. I do not ſpeak of what the prophets did to give a more lively repreſentation of the things they foretold; becauſe ſuch figurative actions were the effect of divine inſpiration. but even in other caſes, we find that thoſe people underſtood much better than we do, how to expreſs their grief, and fear, and other paſſions. and hence, no doubt, aroſe thoſe ſurpriſing effects of eloquence, which we never experience now.

B. You approve then of many different geſtures, and † various inflections of the voice?

† In omni voce, eſt quiddam medium; ſed ſuum cuique: hinc gradatim adſcendere vocem utile, et ſuave eſt: (nam a principio clamare agreſte quiddam eſt:) et illud idem ad formandum eſt vocem ſalutare: deinde eſt quiddam contentius extremum----eſt item contra quiddam in remiſſione graviſſimum, quoque tamquam ſonorum gradibus deſcenditur. haec varietas, et hic per omnes ſonos vocis curſus, et ſe tuebitur, et actioni afferet ſuavitatem. Cic. *de Orat. lib.* iii. §. 61.

A. It is that variety which gives ſo much grace, and force to the action of an orator; and made Demoſthenes far excel all others. the more eaſy and familiar that the voice and action appear, when the ſpeaker only narrates, explains, or inſtructs; the more apt he will be to ſurpriſe and move the audience in thoſe parts of his diſcourſe, where he grows ſuddenly vehement, and enforces lofty affecting ſentiments by a ſuitable energy of voice, and action. this due ‡ pronunciation is a kind of muſic; whoſe beauty conſiſts in the variety of pro-

‡ Ornata eſt pronuntiatio, cui ſuffragatur vox facilis, magna, beata, flexibilis, firma, dulcis, durabilis, clara, pura, ſecans aëra, auribus ſedens. eſt enim quaedam ad auditum accommodata, non magnitudine ſed proprietate, ad hoc velut tractabilis; utique habens omnes in ſe qui deſiderantur ſonos *intentioneſque*, et toto ut aiunt organo inſtructa---illud vero maximum, quod ſecundum *rationem rerum* de quibus dicimus, animorumque habitus, *conformanda vox* eſt, ne ab oratione diſcordet. vitemus igitur illam quae *Graece* μονοτονία vocatur, una quaedam ſpiritus ac ſoni intentio: non ſolum ne dicamus clamoſe, quod inſanum eſt; aut intra loquendi modum, quod motu caret; aut ſummiſſo murmure, quo etiam debilitatur omnis intentio: ſed ut in iiſdem partibus, iiſdemque affectibus, ſint tamen quaedam non ita magnae vocis *declinationes*, prout aut verborum dignitas, aut ſententiarum natura, aut depoſitio, aut inceptio, aut tranſitus poſtulabit: ut qui ſingulis pinxerunt coloribus, alia tamen eminentiora, alia reductiora fecerunt; ſine quo ne membris quidem ſuas lineas dediſſent.

Quint. *lib.* xi. *c.* 3.

per tones, and inflections of the voice, which ought to riſe or fall with a juſt and eaſy cadence, according to the nature of the things we expreſs. it gives a light as well as a grace to language; and is the very life and ſpirit of diſcourſe.

B. According to your notions of elocution, it is an art unknown to our greateſt orators. the preacher that you and I heard, about a fortnight ago, did not obſerve your rule: nor even ſeem to endeavour it. except the firſt thirty words of his ſermon, he ſpake always in the ſame tone: and the only ſign I could perceive of his being more vehement in ſome parts of his diſcourſe, than in others, was, that when he ſeemed earneſt, he ſpoke faſter than at other times.

A. To me, Sir, his voice ſeemed to have two tones; tho' they were not well adapted to his words. you obſerved juſtly enough that he did not follow the rules of pronunciation: and I believe he did not perceive the need of them. his voice is naturally melodious: and tho' it be ill managed, it is however pleaſing enough. but you ſee plainly that it does not make thoſe ſtrong affecting impreſſions on the mind that it would produce, if it had ſuch various inflections as are proper to expreſs the ſpeaker's ſentiments. ſuch preachers are like fine clocks, that give a clear, full, ſoft, agreeable ſound; but after all they are clocks only, of no ſignificancy: and having no variety of notes, they are incapable of harmony, or eloquence.

B. But were there not many graces in the rapidity of his diſcourſe?

A. Yes: and I grant that in ſome affecting, lively paſſages one ought to ſpeak faſter than uſual. but 'tis a great fault to ſpeak with ſo much precipitation that one cannot ſtop himſelf, nor be diſtinctly underſtood. the voice and action bear ſome reſemblance to verſe. ſometimes we muſt uſe ſuch a ſlow, and grave meaſure as is fit to deſcribe things of that character: and ſometimes a ſhort impetuous one, to expreſs what is quick and ardent. to uſe always the ſame degree of action, and the ſame tone of voice, is like preſcribing one remedy for all diſtempers. but we ought to excuſe the uniformity of that preacher's voice, and action. for, beſides his poſſeſſing many excellent qualities, the fault we complain of, is the natural effect of his ſtile. we have already agreed that the modulation of the voice ſhould be exactly ſuited to the words. now his ſtile is even, and uniform, without the leaſt variety. on the one hand, it is not familiar, inſinuating and popular: and on the other, it has nothing in it that is lively, figurative, and ſublime: but it conſiſts of a conſtant flow of words, that preſs one after the other; containing a cloſe and well-connected chain of reaſoning, on clear ideas. in a word, he is a man that talks good ſenſe very correctly. nay we muſt acknowledge that he has done great ſervice to the pulpit: he has reſcued it from the ſervitude of vain declaimers; and filled it himſelf

with much ſtrength and dignity. he is very capable of convincing people: but I know few preachers who perſuade and move them leſs than he doth. if you obſerve carefully, you will even find that his way of preaching is not very inſtructive, for, beſides his not having a familiar, engaging, pathetic manner of talking (as I obſerved before;) his diſcourſe does not in the leaſt † ſtrike the imagination, but is addreſſed to the underſtanding only. it is a thread of reaſoning that cannot be comprehended without the cloſeſt attention. and ſeeing there are but few hearers capable of ſuch a conſtant application of mind, they retain little or nothing of his diſcourſe. it is like a torrent that hurries along at once,

† *The ſenſes and the imagination are fruitful and inexhauſtible ſources of miſtakes and deluſion: but the underſtanding or mind acting by itſelf, is not ſo ſubject to error----we cannot always ſpeak ſo as to affect the ſenſes and imagination of others: nor ought we always to endeavour it. when a ſubject is* abſtracted, *we can ſeldom render it* ſenſible [*or apt to ſtrike the imagination,*] *without making it obſcure: it is enough if it be made* intelligible. *nothing can be more unjuſt than the uſual complaints of thoſe who would know every thing; and yet will not apply themſelves to any thing. they take it amiſs when we require their attention; and expect that we ſhould always* ſtrike *their fancy, and continually pleaſe their ſenſes, and their paſſions. but it is not in our power to gratify them. the authors of romances and comedies, are obliged thus to pleaſe and amuſe them: but as for us, it is enough if we can inſtruct thoſe who are truly attentive.*

P. Malbranche's recherche de la verité. *liv.* iii. *c.* i.

and leaves its channel dry. in order to make a lasting impression on people's minds, we must support their attention, by moving their passions: for, dry instructions can have but little influence. but the thing that I reckon least natural in this preacher, is the continual motion he gives his arms; while there is nothing figurative, nor moving in his words. the action used in ordinary conversation, would suit his stile best: or his impetuous gesture would require a stile full of sallies and vehemence: and even then he behoved to manage his warmth better, and render it less uniform. in fine, I think he is a great man; but not an orator. a country preacher who can alarm his hearers, and draw tears from them, answers the end of eloquence better than he.

B. But how shall we know the particular gestures, and the inflexions of voice that are agreeable to nature?

A. I told you before that the whole art of good orators consists in observing what nature does when unconstrained. you ought not to imitate those haranguers who chuse always to declaim; but will never talk to their hearers. on the contrary, you should address yourself to an audience in such a modest, respectful, engaging manner, that each of them shall think you are speaking to him in particular. and this is the use and advantage of natural, familiar, insinuating tones of voice. they ought always to be grave and becoming: and even strong and pathetic, when the subject requires it. but you must not fancy that you can express the passions by

the mere ſtrength of voice: like thoſe noiſy ſpeakers who by bawling and toſſing themſelves about, ſtun their hearers, inſtead of affecting them. if we would ſucceed in painting, and raiſing the paſſions; we muſt know exactly what movements they inſpire. for inſtance, obſerve what is the poſture, and what the voice of one, whoſe heart is pierced with ſorrow, or ſurprized at the ſight of an aſtoniſhing object: remark the natural action of the eyes; what the hands do; and what the whole body. on ſuch occaſions nature appears; and you need only follow it: if you muſt employ † art, conceal it ſo well under an exact imitation, that it may paſs for nature itſelf. but to ſpeak the truth, orators in ſuch caſes, are like poets who write elegies or other paſſionate verſes; they muſt ‡ feel the paſſion they deſcribe,

† Τότε γὰρ ἡ τέχνη τέλειος, ἡνίκ' ἂν φύσις ἔναγ δοκῇ· ἡ δ' αὖ φύσις ἐπίψυχὸς, ὅταν λανθάνουσα περιέχῃ τὴν τέχνην.

Longinus. §. xxii.

‡ Ut ridentibus arrident, ita flentibus adſunt
Humani vultus. ſi vis me flere, dolendum eſt
Primum ipſi tibi———
——male ſi mandata loqueris,
Aut dormitabo, aut ridebo. triſtia moeſtum
Vultum verba decent: iratum plena minarum.
Format enim natura prius nos intus ad omnem
Fortunarum habitum; juvat, aut impellit ad iram.
Aut ad humum moerore gravi deducit, et angit:
Poſt effert animi motus interprete lingua.

Hor. *de A. P.*

elſe they can never paint it well. the greateſt art imaginable can never ſpeak like * true paſſion, and undiſguiſed nature. ſo that you will always be but an imperfect orator, if you be not thorowly moved with thoſe ſentiments that you paint, and would infuſe into others. nor do I ſay this from a pious motive: I ſpeak now only as † an orator.

B. The caſe, I think, is abundantly plain: but you ſpoke to us of the eyes: have they their rhetoric too?

A. Yes; if you will believe ‡ Tully, and other an-

* Θαῤῥῶν γὰ᾽ ἀφορισαίμην ἄν ὡς ὑδὲν ὕτως ὡς τὸ γενναῖον πάθος ἔνθα χρὴ μεγαλήγορον, ὥσπερ ὑπὸ μανίας τινὸς, καὶ πνεύματος ἐνθουσιασικῦ ἐκπνέον, καὶ οἱονεὶ φοιβάζον τὰς λόγυς. Longinus. §. viii.

† Neque fieri poteſt, ut doleat is qui audit, ut oderit, ut invideat, ut pertimeſcat aliquid, niſi omnes ii motus quos orator adhibere volet judici, in ipſo oratore impreſſi, atque inuſti videbuntur-----ut enim nulla materies tam facilis ad exardeſcendum eſt, quae niſi admoto igni ignem concipere poſſit: ſic nulla mens eſt tam ad comprehendendam vim oratoris parata, quae poſſit incendi, niſi inflammatus ipſe ad eam, et ardens acceſſeris.

Cic. *de Orat. lib.* ii. §. 45.

‡ Sed in ore ſunt omnia. in eo autem ipſo dominatus eſt omnis *oculorum*---animi enim eſt omnis actio; et imago animi vultus eſt, indices oculi. nam haec eſt una pars corporis quae quot animi motus ſunt, tot ſignificationes, et commutationes poſſit efficere----oculi ſunt quorum tum intentione, tum remiſſione, tum conjectu, tum hilaritate motus animorum ſignificemus apte cum genere ipſo orationis: eſt enim *actio* quaſi *fermo corporis;* quo

tient orators. nothing is more intelligible than the aſpect: it expreſſes every paſſion of the ſoul. and in the aſpect, the eyes are moſt active and ſignificant. one well-timed look will pierce to the bottom of the heart.

B. The preacher we were ſpeaking of, has uſually his eyes ſhut. when we obſerve him near, it is very ſhocking.

A. It is diſagreeable becauſe we perceive that he wants one of the chief things that ought to enliven his diſcourſe.

B. But why does he ſo?

A. He makes haſte to pronounce his words; and ſhuts his eyes, becauſe it helps his labouring memory.

B. I obſerved indeed that it was very much burdened: ſometimes he repeated ſeveral words to find out the thread of his diſcourſe. ſuch repetitions make one look like a careleſs ſchool-boy that has forgot his leſſon. they are very diſagreeable; and would not be eaſily excuſed in a preacher of leſs note.

A. It is not ſo much the preacher's fault as the defect of the method he follows, after many others. ſo long as men preach by heart, and often, they will be apt to fall into this perplexity.

B. How do you mean? would you have us not

magis menti congruens eſſe debet.----quare in hac noſtra actione ſecundum vocem vultus valet: is autem oculis gubernatur.

Cic. *de Orat. lib.* iii. §. 59.

preach by heart? without doing ſo, one could not make an exact pithy diſcourſe.

A. I am not againſt a preacher's getting ſome particular ſermons by heart. they may always have time enough to prepare themſelves for extraordinary occaſions. and they might even acquit themſelves handſomely without ſuch great preparation.

B. How? this ſeems incredible.

A. If I be miſtaken, I ſhall readily own it. let us only examine the point without prepoſſeſſion. what is the chief aim of an orator? is it not to perſuade? and in order to this, ought he not to affect his hearers, by moving their paſſions?

B. I grant it.

A. The moſt lively and moving way of preaching is therefore the beſt.

B. True: what do you conclude from that?

A. Which of two orators will have the moſt powerful and affecting manner; he who learns his diſcourſe by heart; or he who ſpeaks without reciting word for word what he had ſtudyed?

B. He, I think, who has got his diſcourſe by heart.

A. Have patience: and let us ſtate the queſtion right. on the one hand, I ſuppoſe a man prepares his diſcourſe exactly, and learns it by heart to the leaſt ſyllable. on the other hand, I ſuppoſe another perſon who fills his mind with the ſubject he is to talk of; who ſpeaks with great eaſe; (for, you would not have any

body † attempt to ſpeak in public, without having proper talents for it:) in ſhort, a man who has attentively conſidered all the principles, and parts of the ſubject he is to handle; and has a comprehenſive view of them in all their extent; who has reduced his thoughts into a proper method; and prepared the ſtrongeſt expreſſions to explain and inforce them in a ſenſible manner; who ranges all his arguments, and has a ſufficient number of affecting figures: ſuch a man certainly knows every thing that he ought to ſay; and the order in which the whole ſhould be placed; § to ſucceed therefore in

† ——Ego nec ſtudium ſine divite vena,
Nec rude quid profit video ingenium——Hor. *de A. P.*

§ *He then that would prepare himſelf to be a preacher in this method, muſt accuſtom himſelf to talk freely to himſelf, to let his thoughts flow from him; eſpecially when he feels an edge and heat upon his mind: for then happy expreſſions will come in his mouth——he muſt alſo be writing eſſays upon all ſorts of ſubjects; for by writing he will bring himſelf to a correctneſs both in thinking and in ſpeaking: and thus by a hard practice for two or three years, a man may render himſelf ſuch a maſter in this way, that he can never be ſurprized; nor will new thoughts ever dry up upon him. he muſt talk over to himſelf the whole body of divinity; and accuſtom himſelf to explain, and prove; to clear objections; and to apply every part of it to ſome practical uſe---and if in theſe his meditations, happy thoughts, and noble tender expreſſions, do at any time offer themſelves, he muſt not loſe them; but write them down----by a very few years practice of two or three of ſuch ſoliloquies a-day, chiefly in the morning when the head is clear-*

his delivery, he wants nothing but thoſe common expreſſions that muſt make the bulk of his diſcourſe. but do you believe now that ſuch a perſon would have any difficulty in finding eaſy familiar expreſſions?

B. He could not find ſuch juſt and handſome ones as he might have hit on, if he had ſought them leiſurely in his cloſet.

A. I own that. but according to you, he would loſe only a few ornaments: and you know how to rate that loſs according to the principles we laid down before. on the other ſide, what advantage muſt he not have in the freedom and force of his action: which is the main thing. ſuppoſing that he has applyed himſelf much to compoſing, (as † Cicero requires of an orator,) that he has read all the beſt models; and has a natural or acquired eaſineſs of ſtile and ſpeech; that he has abundance of ſolid knowledge and learning; that he underſtands his ſubject perfectly well; and has ranged all the parts and proofs of it in his head: in ſuch a caſe

eſt, and the ſpirits are livelieſt, a man will contract a great eaſineſs both in thinking, and ſpeaking.

Bp. Burnet's diſc. on the paſtoral care, *p.* 210, 211.

† Caput autem eſt, quod (ut vere dicam) minime facimus, (eſt enim magni laboris, quem plerique fugimus) quam plurimum ſcribere---ſtilus optimus, et praeſtantiſſimus dicendi effector, ac magiſter; neque injuria: nam ſi ſubitam et fortuitam orationem, commentatio, et cogitatio facile vincit; hanc ipſam profecto aſſidua ac diligens ſcriptura ſuperabit. *De Orat. lib.* i. §. 33.

we muſt conclude that he will ſpeak with force, and † order, and readineſs. his periods perhaps will not ſooth the ear ſo much as the others; and for that reaſon he muſt be the better orator. his tranſitions may not be ſo fine: it is no great matter: tho' theſe he might have prepared without getting them by heart: beſides, theſe little omiſſions were common to the moſt eloquent orators among the ancients. they thought ſuch negligence was very natural; and ought even to be imitated, to avoid the appearance of too great preparation. what then could our orator want? he might make ſome little repetition: but that too muſt have its uſe. not only will the judicious hearer take a pleaſure in obſerving nature here, which leads one often to reſume whatever view of the ſubject ſtrikes ſtrongeſt upon the mind: but likewiſe this repetition imprints the truth more deeply; which is the beſt manner of inſtruction. at the worſt, one might find in his diſcourſe ſome inaccuracy of conſtruction, ſome obſolete word that has been cenſured by the academy; ſomething that is irregular; or, if you will, ſome weak or miſapplyed expreſſion that he may happen to drop in the warmth of action. but ſurely they muſt have narrow ſouls who can think ſuch little eſcapes worth any one's notice.

† ——cui lecta potenter erit res,
Nec facundia deſerit hunc, nec lucidus ordo.
Verbaque proviſam rem non invita ſequentur.
Hor. *de A. P.*

there is abundance of theſe to be met with in the moſt † excellent originals. the greateſt orators among the antients neglected them: and if our views were as noble as theirs, we ſhould not ſo much regard thoſe ‡ trifles, which can amuſe none but ſuch as are not able to diſcern and purſue what is truly great. excuſe my freedom, Sir: if I did not think you had a genius very different from theſe little, cavilling critics I condemn, I ſhould ſpeak of them with greater caution.

B. You may always ſpeak your mind, Sir, without any reſerve on my account. be pleaſed therefore to go on with your compariſon.

A. Conſider then, in the next place, the advantages that a preacher muſt have who does not get his ſermon

† Παρατεθεμένος δ' ὐκ ὀλίγα ϗ αὐτὸς ἁμαρτήματα, ϗ Ομηρυ, καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ὅσοι μέγιστοι, ϗ ἥκιστα τοῖς πλάσμασιν ἀρεχόμενος, ὅμως δὲ ὐχ ἁμαρτήμαῖα μᾶλλον αὐτὰ ἐκύσια καλῶν, ἢ παροράματα δι' ἀμέλειαν, εικῆ πυ ϗ ὡς ἔτυχεν ὑπὸ μεγαλοφυΐας ἀνεπισκάτως παρεννενεγμένα.

Longinus. §. xxxiii.

‡ Sunt delicta tamen, quibus ignoviſſe velimus:
Nam neque chorda ſonum reddit quem vult manus et mens;
Poſcentique gravem perſæpe remittit acutum:
Nec ſemper feriet quodcunque minabitur arcus.
Verum ubi plura nitent in carmine, non ego paucis
Offendar maculis, quas aut incuria fudit,
Aut humana parum cavit natura------

Hor. *de A. P.*

by heart. he is intirely maſter of himſelf: he ſpeaks in an eaſy unaffected way; and not like a formal declaimer. things flow then from their proper ſource. if he has a natural talent for eloquence, his language muſt be lively and moving: even † the warmth that animates him, muſt lead him to ſuch pertinent expreſſions, and figures, as he could not have found out by ſtudy.

B. Why? ſurely a man may enliven his fancy, and compoſe very ſprightly diſcourſes in his cloſet.

A. I own that: but a juſt elocution and geſture muſt

† *But the rule I have obſerved laſt, is the moſt neceſſary of all: and without it all the reſt will never do the buſineſs: it is this: that a man muſt have in himſelf a deep ſenſe of the truth and power of religion: he muſt have a life and flame in his thoughts with relation to theſe ſubjects: he muſt have felt himſelf thoſe things which he intends to explain and recommend to others. he muſt obſerve narrowly the motions of his own mind;--- that ſo he may have a lively heat in himſelf when he ſpeaks of them; and that he may ſpeak in ſo ſenſible a manner, that it may be almoſt* felt *that he ſpeaks from his heart. there is an authority in the ſimpleſt things that can be ſaid, when they carry viſible characters of genuineneſs in them. now if a man can carry on this method, and by much meditation and prayer, draw down divine influences, which are always to be expected when a man puts himſelf in the way of them, and prepares himſelf for them; he will always feel that* while he *is muſing, a fire is kindled within him; and then he will ſpeak with authority, and without conſtraint: his thoughts will be true, and his expreſſions free and eaſy.*

Diſcourſe of the paſtoral care. *p.* 111, 118.

ſtill give them a greater life, and ſpirit. beſides, what one ſays in the ardour of action is far more natural and affecting: it has a negligent air; and diſcovers none of that art which is viſible in all elaborate compoſures. we may add farther, that a skilful experienc'd orator ‡ adapts things to the capacity of his hearers; and varies his diſcourſe according to the impreſſion he ſees it makes upon their minds. for, he eaſily perceives whether they underſtand him, or not; and whether he gains their attention, and moves their hearts: and if it be needful, he reſumes the ſame things in a different manner, and ſets them in another light: he cloaths them in more familiar images, and comparisons: or he goes back to the plaineſt principles, from which he gradually deduces the truths he would enforce: or he endeavours to cure thoſe paſſions, that hinder the truth from making a due impreſſion. this is the true art of inſtruction and perſuaſion: and without this addreſs and preſence of mind, we can only make roving and fruitleſs declamations. obſerve now how far the orator who gets every thing by heart, falls ſhort of the other's ſucceſs. if we ſuppoſe then a man to preach who depends in-

‡ Erit igitur haec facultas in eo quem volumus eſſe eloquentem, ut definire rem poſſit; neque id faciat tam preſſe et anguſte, quam in illis eruditiſſimis diſputationibus fieri ſolet, ſed cum explanatius, tum etiam uberius, et ad commune judicium, *popularemque intelligentiam* accommodatius—— Cic. *Orat.* §. 33.

tirely on his memory, and dares not pronounce a word different from his leſſon; his ſtile will be very exact: but, as Dionyſius Halicarnaſſeus obſerves of Iſocrates, his compoſition muſt pleaſe more when it is read, than when it is pronounced. beſides, let him take what pains he will, the inflexions of his voice will be too uniform; and always a little conſtrained. he is not like a man that ſpeaks to an audience; but like a rhetorician who recites or declaims. his action muſt be aukward and forced: by fixing his eyes too much, he ſhews how much his memory labours in his delivery: and he is afraid to give way to an unuſual emotion, leſt he ſhould loſe the thread of his diſcourſe. now the hearer perceiving ſuch an undiſguiſed art, is ſo far from being touched, and captivated, as he ought to be, that he obſerves the ſpeaker's artifice with coldneſs and neglect.

B. But did not the antient orators do what you condemn?

A. I believe not.

B. What! do you think that Demoſthenes and Tully did not learn by heart thoſe finiſhed orations they have left us?

A. We know very well that they compoſed and wrote their harangues, before they ſpake in public: but we have ſeveral reaſons to believe that they did not get them by heart, word for word. even the orations of Demoſthenes, as we have them, ſhew rather the ſublimity and vehemence of a great genius that was

accuſtomed to ſpeak powerfully of public affairs; than the accuracy and politeneſs of an author. as for Cicero, in ſeveral places of his harangues, we find things ſpoken on ſudden emergencies, that he could not poſſibly have foreſeen. and if we take his ‡ opinion of this matter; he thinks an orator ought to have a great memory: and he even ſpeaks of an artificial kind of memory as an uſeful invention: but all he ſays on this point does not imply that we ought to learn every word by heart. on the contrary, he ſeems only to require, that we ſhould range all the parts of a diſcourſe exactly in our memory, and prepare the figures and chief expreſſions we are to uſe; ſo as to be ready to add off-hand whatever may occaſionally be ſuggeſted from a view of the audience, or unexpected accidents. and it is for this reaſon, that he requires ſo much application and preſence of mind in an orator.

B. You muſt allow me to tell you, Sir, that all this does not convince me: for I cannot believe that one can ſpeak ſo very well, without having prepared and adjuſted all his expreſſions.

‡ Sed verborum memoria, quae *minus* eſt nobis *neceſſaria*, majore imaginum varietate diſtinguitur: multa enim ſunt verba, quae quaſi articuli connectunt *membra* orationis, quae formari ſimilitudine nulla poſſunt: *earum* fingendae nobis ſunt *imagines*, quibus ſemper utamur. rerum memoria, *propria* eſt oratoris: eam ſingulis perſonis bene poſitis notare poſſumus, ut *ſententias* imaginibus, *ordinem* locis comprehendamus.

De Orat. lib. ii. §. 88.

C. The reaſon why it is ſo hard to perſuade you in this caſe, is, becauſe you judge of the matter by common experience. if they who get their ſermons by heart, were to preach without that preparation, it is likely they would ſucceed but very ill: nor am I ſurprized at it: for, they are not accuſtomed to follow nature: they have ſtudyed only to compoſe their ſermons; and that too with affectation. they have never once thought of ‡ ſpeaking in a noble, ſtrong, and na-

‡ *This leads me to conſider the difference that is between the* reading, *and the* ſpeaking *of ſermons.* reading *is peculiar to this nation; and is* endured *in no other. it has indeed made our ſermons more exact; and ſo has produced to us many volumes of the beſt that are extant. but after all, tho' ſome few read ſo happily, pronounce ſo truly, and enter ſo entirely into thoſe affections which they recommend; that in them, we ſee both the* correctneſs *of reading, and the* ſeriouſneſs *of ſpeaking ſermons; yet every one is not ſo happy. ſome by hanging their head perpetually over their notes, by blundering as they read; and by a curſory running over them, do ſo leſſen the matter of their ſermons, that as they are* generally *read with very little life or affection, ſo they are heard with as little regard, or eſteem. thoſe who* read, *ought certainly to be at a little more pains, than (for the moſt part) they are to read true; to pronounce with an* emphaſis; *to raiſe their head, and to direct their eyes to their hearers: and if they practiſed more, alone, the juſt way of reading, they might deliver their ſermons with much more advantage. man is a low ſort of creature: he does not (nay the greater part cannot,) conſider things in themſelves, without thoſe little ſeaſonings that muſt recommend them to their affections——beſides, the people (who*

tural manner. indeed the greateſt part of preachers have not a ſufficient fund of ſolid knowledge to depend on, and are therefore afraid to truſt themſelves without the uſual preparation. the method of getting ſermons by heart, qualifies many, who have but very ſcanty and ſuperficial parts, to make a tolerable figure in the pulpit; ſeeing they need only lay together a certain number of paſſages, and remarks: and however little genius or aſſiſtance a man has, he may with time and aplication be able to work up and poliſh his matter into ſome form. but to preach with judgment and ſtrength requires an attentive meditation upon the firſt principles of religion; an exact knowledge of morality; an inſight into antiquity; ſtrength of reaſoning; and ſuitable action. is not this, Sir, what you require in an orator who does not learn his diſcourſe by heart?

A. You have explained my thoughts exactly. only it may not be improper to add, that tho' a man ſhould not poſſeſs all theſe qualities in a remarkable degree, he may yet preach very well, if he has a ſolid judgment, a tolerable ſtock of knowledge, and an eaſy way of ſpeaking. for, in this method, as in the other, there may be different degrees of eloquence. you may further obſerve that moſt of thoſe who preach without getting their ſermons by heart, do not prepare them-

are too apt to cenſure the clergy) are eaſily carried into an obvious reflection on reading, *that it is an effect of lazineſs.*

Diſcourſe of the paſtoral care, *ch.* ix.

ſelves enough. they ought to ſtudy their ſubject with the cloſeſt attention; prepare all thoſe moving paſſages that ſhould affect the audience; and give the ſeveral parts of their diſcourſe ſuch an order as will beſt ſerve to ſet the whole in the moſt proper light.

B. You have oftentimes ſpoken of this order: do you mean any thing elſe by it than a diviſion of the ſubject? perhaps you have ſome peculiar notion on this point too.

A. You think that you rally me: but in good earneſt, I am as ſingular in my opinion upon this head, as on any other.

B. I eaſily believe you.

A. It is certainly ſo: and ſince we have fallen upon this ſubject, I will ſhew you how far I think the greater part of orators are defective in the point of order.

B. Since you are ſo fond of order, I hope you do not diſlike diviſions.

A. I am far from approving them.

B. Why? do they not methodize a diſcourſe?

A. For the moſt part, diviſions give only a ſeeming order; while they really mangle and clog a diſcourſe, by ſeparating it into two or three parts; which muſt interrupt the orator's action, and the effect it ought to produce, there remains no true ‡ unity after ſuch divi-

‡ *A text being opened, then the point upon which the ſermon is to run is to be opened: and it will be the better heard,*

ſions; ſeeing they make two or three different diſcourſes, which are joined into one, only by an arbitrary connection. for three ſermons preached at different times, (if they be formed upon ſome regular concerted plan, as the ſermons in Advent uſually are,) make one piece, or intire diſcourſe, as much, as the three points of any of theſe ſermons make one whole by being joined, and delivered, together.

B. What is it then that you mean by order? how confuſed muſt a diſcourſe be that is not divided?

A. Do you think there is more confuſion in the orations of Demoſthenes, and Tully, than in the ſermons of your pariſh-preacher?

B. I do not know----I believe not.

A. You need not be afraid of giving your judgment too freely. the harangues of theſe great men are not divided as our ſermons are. nay Iſocrates (of whom we ſpake ſo much before,) and other antient orators, did not follow our method of dividing. the fathers of the church knew nothing of it. even S. Bernard, the laſt of them, only gives a hint of ſome diviſions, and does not purſue them; nor divide his diſcourſes in form. and for a long time after him, ſermons were not divided: it is a modern invention which we owe originally to the ſcholaſtic divines.

and underſtood if there be but one point in a ſermon: ſo that one head, and only one, is well ſtated, and fully ſet out. Diſcourſe of the paſtoral care. *p.* 249.

B. I grant that the ſchool-men are a very bad model for eloquence: but what form did the antients uſe to give their diſcourſes?

A. They did not divide them; but they pointed out carefully all thoſe things that ought to be diſtinguiſhed: to each of them † they aſſigned its proper place; after having attentively conſidered where it might be introduced to the beſt advantage, and be fitteſt to make a due impreſſion. ofttimes that which would ſeem nothing to the purpoſe, by being unſeaſonably urged, has a very great weight when it is reſerved for its proper place; till the audience be prepared by other things to feel all its force and conſequence. nay a ſingle word when happily applyed, will ſet the truth in the ſtrongeſt light. Cicero tells us that we ought ſometimes to delay giving a full view of the truth, till the very concluſion. but then, throughout our diſcourſe there ought to run ſuch a concatenation of proofs, as that the firſt may make way for the ſecond: and the next always ſerve to ſupport the former. we ought at firſt to give a general view of our ſubject, and endeavour to gain the favour of the audience

† Ordinis haec virtus erit, et venus, aut ego fallor,
Ut jam nunc dicat, jam nunc debentia dici
Pleraque differat, et praeſens in tempus omittat——
Infelix operis ſumma, quia ponere totum
Neſciet——

Hor. de A. P.

by a ‡ modeſt introduction, a reſpectful addreſs, and the genuine marks of candour and probity. then we ſhould eſtabliſh thoſe principles on which we deſign to argue; and in a clear, eaſy, ſenſible manner propoſe the principal facts we are to build on; inſiſting chiefly on thoſe circumſtances, of which we intend to make uſe afterwards. from theſe principles and facts we muſt draw juſt conſequences; and argue in ſuch a clear and well-connected manner, that all our proofs may ſupport each other; and ſo be the more remembered. every ſtep we advance, our diſcourſe ought to grow ſtronger; ſo that the hearers may gradually perceive the force and evidence of the truth: and then we ought to diſplay it in ſuch lively images and movements as are proper to excite the paſſions. in order to this we muſt know their various ſprings, and the mutual dependence they have one upon another; which of them we can moſt eaſily move, and employ to raiſe the reſt; and which of them in fine, is able to produce the greateſt effects; and muſt therefore be applyed to, in the concluſion of our diſcourſe. it is ofttimes proper, at the cloſe, to make a ſhort recapitulation, in which the orator ought to exert

‡ Sed haec adjuvant in oratore, lenitas vocis, vultus, pudoris ſignificatio, verborum comitas: ſi quid perſequare acrius, ut invitus, et coactus facere videare. facilitatis, liberalitatis, manſuetudinis, pietatis, grati animi, non appetentis, non avidi ſigna proferri perutile eſt—tantum autem efficitur ſenſu quodam ac ratione dicendi, ut quaſi mores oratoris effingat oratio.

Cic. *de Orat. lib.* ii. §. 43.

all his force and skill in giving the audience a full, clear, conciſe view of the chief topics he has enlarged on. in ſhort, one is not obliged always to follow this method without any variation. there are exceptions, and allowances, to be made, for different ſubjects and occaſions. and even in this order I have propoſed, one may find an endleſs variety. but now you may eaſily ſee that this method (which is chiefly taken from Tully,) cannot be obſerved in a diſcourſe that is divided into three parts, nor can it be followed in each particular diviſion. we ought therefore to chuſe ſome method, Sir, but ſuch a method as is not diſcovered, and promiſed, in the beginning of our diſcourſe. Cicero tells us that the beſt method is generally to conceal the order we follow, till we lead the hearer to it without his being aware of it before. I remember he ſays, in expreſs terms, that we ought to conceal even the number of our arguments; ſo that one ſhall not be able to count them. tho' they be very diſtinct in themſelves; and that we ought not plainly to point out the diviſion of a diſcourſe. but ſuch is the undiſtinguiſhing taſte of theſe latter ages, that an audience cannot perceive any order, unleſs the ſpeaker diſtinctly explain it in the beginning; and even intimate to them his gradual advances from the firſt to the ſecond, and following general heads or ſubdiviſions, of his diſcourſe.

C. But do not diviſions help to ſupport the attention, and eaſe the memory of the hearers? it is for

their better inſtruction that the ſpeaker divides his diſcourſe.

A. A diviſion chiefly relieves the ſpeaker's memory. and even this effect might be much better obtained by his following a natural order without any expreſs diviſion: for, the true connection of things beſt directs the mind. our common diviſions are of uſe to thoſe only who have ſtudied, and been trained up to this method in the ſchools. and if the common people retain the diviſion better than the reſt of the ſermon; it is only becauſe they hear it often repeated: but generally ſpeaking they beſt remember practical points, and ſuch things as ſtrike their ſenſes and imagination.

B. The order you propoſe may be proper enough for ſome ſubjects: but it cannot be fit for all: for, we have not always facts to lay down.

A. When we have none, we muſt do without them: but there are very few ſubjects into which they might not be aptly introduced. one of Plato's chief beauties is, that in the beginning of his moral pieces he uſually gives us ſome fragment of hiſtory, or ſome tradition that ſerves as the foundation of his diſcourſe. this method would far more become thoſe who preach religion; which is entirely founded upon tradition, hiſtory, and the moſt antient records. indeed moſt preachers argue but weakly; and do not inſtruct people ſufficiently, becauſe they do not trace back things to theſe ſources.

B. We have already given you too much trouble, Sir, and I am almoſt aſhamed to detain you longer: but I wiſh heartily you would allow me to ask you a few more queſtions concerning the rules of public diſcourſe,

A. With all my heart: I am not yet weary: you may diſpoſe, as you pleaſe, of the little time I have left.

B. Well then, you would have all falſe and trifling ornaments entirely baniſhed from diſcourſe. now, tho' you touched upon this point before, pray ſhew me by ſome ſenſible examples how to ‡ diſtinguiſh ſuch falſe beauties from thoſe that are ſolid and natural.

A. Do you love quavering notes in muſic? are you not better pleaſed with thoſe briſk ſignificant notes that deſcribe things, and expreſs the paſſions?

B. Yes, certainly: for, quavers are of no uſe: they only amuſe the ear, and do not affect the mind. our muſic was once full of them; and was therefore very

‡ *Falſe eloquence, like the priſmatic glaſs,*
It's gaudy colours ſpreads on ev'ry place;
The face of nature we no more ſurvey,
All glares alike, without diſtinction gay.
But true expreſſion, like th' unchanging ſun,
Clears and improves whate'er it ſhines upon,
It gilds all objects, but it alters none.
Expreſſion is the dreſs of thought, and ſtill
Appears more decent, as more ſuitable.

Mr. Pope's eſſay on criticiſm.

weak and confuſed: but now we begin to refine our taſte, and to come nearer the muſic of the antients; which is a kind of paſſionate declamation, that acts powerfully upon the ſoul.

A. I knew that muſic, of which you are ſo good a judge, would ſerve to make you underſtand what concerns eloquence. there ought to be a kind of eloquence in muſic itſelf; and in both theſe arts we ought to reject all falſe and trilling beauties. do you not perceive now that by a trilling diſcourſe I mean the humming jingle of languid uniform periods; a chiming of words that returns perpetually, like the burden of a ſong? this is the falſe eloquence that reſembles bad muſic.

B. I wiſh, Sir, you could make it a little plainer ſtill.

A. The reading of good and bad orators will more effectually form your taſte, on this point, than all the rules in the world. however it were eaſy to ſatisfy you by ſome pertinent examples. I will not mention any modern ones; tho' we abound in falſe ornaments. that I may not offend any perſon, let us return to Iſocrates who is the ſtandard of thoſe nice and florid harangues that are now in vogue. did you ever read his famous panegyric on Helen?

B. Yes: I have read it ſome time ago.

A. How did you like it?

B. Extremely well. I thought I never ſaw ſo much wit, elegance, ſweetneſs, invention, and delicacy in any

compoſure. I own to you that Homer himſelf (whom I read afterwards,) did not ſeem to have ſo much ſpirit as he. but now that you have ſhown me what ought to be the true aim of poets and orators, I ſee plainly that Homer, who concealed his art, vaſtly ſurpaſſes Iſocrates who took ſo much pains to diſplay his skill. but I was once charmed with that orator, and ſhould have been ſo ſtill, if you had not undeceived me. Mr. ------ is the Iſocrates of our days: and I perceive that by ſhewing the defects of that antient orator, you condemn all thoſe who imitate his florid effeminate rhetoric.

A. I am now ſpeaking of Iſocrates only——in the beginning of his encomium he magnifies the love that Theſeus had for Helen, and fancyed that he ſhould give a lofty idea of her, by deſcribing the heroic qualities of that great man who fell in love with her: as if Theſeus (whom the antients always repreſent as weak and inconſtant in his amours,) could not have been ſmitten with a woman of a moderate beauty. then he comes to the judgment that Paris formed of her. he ſays that a diſpute having ariſen among the goddeſſes concerning their beauty; they agreed to make Paris judge of it: upon which occaſion Juno proffered him the empire of Aſia: Minerva aſſured him of conſtant victory in battles: and Venus tempted him with the beautiful Helen. now ſeeing Paris, when he was to determine this matter, could not behold the faces of thoſe

goddeſſes, becauſe of their dazling ſplendour, he could only judge of the worth of the three things that they offered: and upon the compariſon he preferred Helen to empire, and to victory. then the orator praiſes the judgment of Paris, in whoſe determination the goddeſſes themſelves acquieſced; and adds theſe remarkable words: † 'I wonder that any one ſhould think Paris indiſcreet in chuſing to live with her, for whom 'many demi-gods would have been willing to die.'

C. This puts me in mind of our preachers who are ſo full of antitheſes and turns of wit. there are a great many ſuch orators as Iſocrates.

A. He is their maſter! all the reſt of his panegyric is of the ‡ ſame ſtrain. it is founded on the long war of Troy; the calamities that the Greeks ſuffered for the rape of Helen, and the praiſe of beauty which has ſo much power over men. there is nothing in the whole diſcourſe ſolidly proved; nor the leaſt point of moral inſtruction. he judges of the worth of things only ac-

† Θαυμάζω δ' εἴ τις οἴεται κακῶς βεβουλεῦσθαι τὸν μετὰ ταύτης ζῆν ἑλόμενον, ἧς ἕνεκα πολλοὶ τῶν ἡμιθέων ἀποθνήσκειν ἠθέλησαν. Iſocr. Hel. Laud.

‡ His very next words are theſe,——Πῶς δ' οὐκ ἂν εἴη ἀνόητος εἰ τὰς θεὰς εἰδὼς περὶ κάλλους φιλονεικούσας, αὐτὸς κάλλους κατεφρόνησε, καὶ μὴ ταύτην ἐνόμισε μεγίστην εἶναι τῶν δώρων, περὶ ἧς κἀκείνας ἐώρα μάλιστα σπουδαζούσας;——Ibid.

cording to mens extravagant paſſions. and as his proofs are weak, ſo his ſtile is flouriſhed and finical. I quoted this paſſage, profane as it is, becauſe it is a very famous one; and becauſe this affected manner is very much in fashion. the more grave diſcourſes of Iſocrates are compoſed in the ſame ſpruce effeminate way; and are full of ſuch falſe beauties as that I now mentioned.

C. I find you like none of thoſe witty turns which have nothing in them that is either ſolid, natural, or affecting; and tend neither to convince, nor paint, nor perſuade. the example you have brought from Iſocrates, tho' it be upon a trifling ſubject, is yet very pertinent: for, all ſuch tinſel-wit muſt appear ſtill more ridiculous when it is applyed to grave and ſerious matters.

A. But, Sir, as to Iſocrates, do not you think I had reaſon to cenſure him as freely as Tully aſſures us Ariſtotle did.

B. What ſays Tully?

A. † That Ariſtotle perceiving Iſocrates had perverted eloquence from its proper uſe to amuſement and oſtentation; and thereby drawn to himſelf the moſt conſiderable diſciples, he applyed to him a verſe of Philoctetes, to ſhew how much he was aſhamed of being ſilent while that vain declaimer carried all before him. but I have done now: it is time for me to be going.

† Lib. 3. §. 35.

B. We cannot part with you ſo ſoon, Sir: will you then allow of no antitheſes?

A. Yes: when the things we ſpeak of are naturally oppoſite one to another, it may be proper enough to ſhew their oppoſition. ſuch antitheſes are juſt, and have a ſolid beauty, and a right application of them is often the moſt eaſy and conciſe manner of explaining things. but it is extremely childiſh to uſe artificial turns and windings to make words claſh and play one againſt another. at firſt, this may happen to dazle thoſe who have no taſte: but they ſoon grow weary of ſuch a ſilly affectation. did you ever obſerve the Gothic architecture of our old churches?

B. Yes; it is very common.

A. Did you take notice of the roſes, holes, unconnected ornaments, and disjointed little knacks that theſe Gothic buildings are full of. theſe odd conceits are juſt ſuch beauties in architecture as forced antitheſes and quibbles are in eloquence. the Grecian architecture is far more ſimple, and admits of none but natural, ſolid and majeſtic ornaments: we ſee nothing in it but what is great, proportioned, and well placed. but the Gothic kind was invented by the Arabians; who being a people of a quick ſprightly fancy; and having no rule, nor culture, could ſcarce avoid falling into theſe whimſical nieeties. and this vivacity corrupted their taſte in all other things. for, they uſed ſophiſms in their logic: they loved little knacks in architecture;

and invented witticiſms in poetry and eloquence. all theſe are of the ſame kind.

B. This is curious indeed. you think then that a ſermon full of forced antitheſes, and ſuch kind of ornaments, is like a church built in the Gothic way.

A. Yes: I think the compariſon is juſt.

B. Let me ask you but one queſtion more; and then you ſhall go.

A. What is it?

B. It ſeems very difficult to give a particular account of facts, in a noble ſtile: and yet we ought to do ſo if we talk ſolidly as you require. pray, what is the proper ſtile for expatiating in ſuch caſes?

A. We are ſo much afraid of a low ſtrain, that our expreſſions are uſually dry, lifeleſs, and indeterminate. they who praiſe a ſaint, pitch on the moſt magnificent phraſes: they tell us he was an admirable perſon; that his virtues were celeſtial; that he was rather an angel, than a man. and thus the whole encomium is a mere declamation, without any proof; and without drawing a juſt character. on the contrary, the ancient Greeks made little uſe of theſe general terms which prove nothing: but they inſiſted much on facts, and the particulars of a character. for inſtance Xenophon does not once ſay in all his Cyropaedia, that Cyrus was an admirable man: but throughout the work he makes us really admire him. thus it is that we ought to praiſe holy perſons, by entering into the particular detail of their ſen-

timents and actions. but there prevails an affected politeneſs among the pedantic and conceited part of all ranks and profeſſions, who value themſelves upon their wit, or learning. they never venture to uſe any expreſſion but what they reckon fine and uncommon. they talk always in a † high ſtrain; and would think it beneath them to call things by their proper names. now in true eloquence almoſt every thing may be introduced. the perfection of poetry itſelf, (which is the loftieſt kind of compoſure) depends on a full and lively deſcription of things in all their circumſtances. when Virgil repreſents the Trojan fleet leaving the African ſhore or arriving on the coaſt of Italy, you ſee every proper circumſtance exactly deſcribed. but we muſt own that the Greeks entered ſtill further into the particular detail of things; and followed nature more cloſely in repreſenting the ſmalleſt circumſtances. for which reaſon, many people would be apt (if they dared) to reckon Homer too plain and ſimple in his narrations. in this antient beautiful ſimplicity, (which few are able to reliſh,) this poet very much reſembles the

† Prima eſt eloquentiae virtus perſpicuitas; et quo quiſque ingenio minus valet, hoc ſe magis *attollere*, et *dilatare* conatur: ut ſtatura breves in digitos eriguntur; et plura infirmi minantur, nam tumidos, et corruptos, et *tinnulos*, et quocumque alio cacozeliae genere peccantes, certum habeo, non virium, ſed *infirmitatis* vitio laborare: ut corpora non robore, ſed valetudine, inflantur. Quint. *lib.* ii. *c.* 3.

holy ſcripture: but in many places the ſacred writings ſurpaſs his, as much as he excells all the other antients, in a natural and lively repreſentation of things.

B. In relating facts then ought we to deſcribe every individual circumſtance that belongs to them?

A. No: we ſhould repreſent nothing to the hearers but what deſerves their attention; and helps to give a clear and juſt idea of the things we deſcribe: ſo that it requires great judgment to make a right † choice of circumſtances. but we muſt not be afraid of mentioning ſuch as can be any-way ſerviceable: for it is a falſe politeneſs that leads us to ſuppreſs ſome uſeful things, becauſe we do not think them capable of any ornament. beſides, Homer has ſhown us by his example, that we might give a ‡ proper grace and embelliſhment to every ſubject.

† See Longinus. §. x.

‡ *Firſt follow nature, and your judgment frame*
By her juſt ſtandard, which is ſtill the ſame:
Unerring nature, ſtill divinely bright,
One clear, unchang'd, and univerſal light;
Life, force, and beauty muſt to all impart,
At once the ſource, and end, and teſt of art.
Art from that fund each juſt ſupply provides,
Works without ſhow; and without pomp preſides.
Thoſe rules of old diſcover'd, not deviſ'd,
Are nature ſtill, but nature methodiz'd:
Nature like monarchy, is but reſtrain'd
By the ſame laws which firſt herſelf ordain'd.

Mr. Pope's Eſſay on Criticiſm.

B. Seeing you condemn the florid ſwelling ſtile; what kind do you reckon fitteſt for public uſe?

A. There ought to be a variety of ſtile in every diſcourſe. we ſhould riſe in our expreſſion when we ſpeak of lofty ſubjects; and be † familiar, in common ones, without being coarſe, or grovelling. in moſt caſes, an eaſy ſimplicity and exactneſs is ſufficient: tho' ſome things require vehemence, and ſublimity. if a painter ſhould draw nothing but magnificent palaces, he could not follow truth; but muſt paint his own fancies; and by that means, ſoon cloy us. he ought to copy nature in its agreeable varieties: and after drawing a ſtately city, it might be proper to repreſent a deſart, and the huts of ſhepherds. moſt of thoſe who aim at making fine harangues injudiciouſly labour to cloath all their thoughts in a ‡ pompous gaudy dreſs: and they fancy that they have ſucceeded happily, when they expreſs

† Εστιν ἄρ' ὁ ἰδιωτισμὸς ἐνίοτε τῷ κόσμῳ παραπολὺ ἐμφανεστικώτερον· ἐπιγιγνώσκεται γὰρ αὐτόθεν ἐκ τοῦ κοινοῦ βίου. τὸ δὲ σύνηθες ἥδη πιθανώτερον------ταῦτα γὰρ ἐγγὺς παραξύει τὴν ἰδιώτην, ἀλλ' οὐκ ἰδιωτεύει τῷ σημαντικῷ.

Longinus. §. xxxi.

‡ Namque illud genus oſtentationi compoſitum, ſolum petit audientium voluptatem: ideoque omnes dicendi artes aperit, ornatumque orationis exponit---mala affectatio, per omne dicendi genus peccat. nam et tumida, et exilia, et praedulcia, et abundantia, et arceſſita, et exultantia ſub idem nomen cadunt. denique κακόζηλον vocatur, quicquid

ſome general remarks in a florid lofty ſtile. their only care is to fill their diſcourſe with abundance of ornaments, to pleaſe the vitiated taſte of their audience: like ignorant cooks who know not how to ſeaſon diſhes, in a proper, natural way; but fancy they muſt give them an exquiſite reliſh by mixing exceſſive quantities of the moſt ſeaſoning things. but the ſtile of a true orator has nothing in it that is ſwelling or oſtentatious: he always adapts it to the ſubjects he treats of, and the perſons he inſtructs: and manages it ſo judiciouſly that he never aims at being ſublime and lofty, but when he ought to be ſo.

B. What you ſaid concerning the language of ſcripture, makes me wiſh earneſtly that you would ſhew us the beauty of it. may we not ſee you ſome time to-morrow?

A. I ſhall hardly have time to-morrow: but I will endeavour to wait on you this evening. and ſince you ſeem ſo deſirous of it, we will talk of the word of God: for hitherto we have only ſpoken of the language of men.

C. Farewell, Sir, I beg of you to be punctual: otherwiſe we muſt come and find you out.

eſt ultra virtutem; quoties ingenium judicio caret, et ſpecie boni falletur; omnium in eloquentia vitiorum peſſimum: nam caetera cum vitentur, hoc petitur. Quintil. *lib.* viii. *c.* 3.

THE THIRD DIALOGUE.

C. I Began to fear, Sir, that you would not come; and was very near going to ſee for you at Mr. ------

A. I was detained by a perplexing affair I had upon my hands: but I have got rid of it to my ſatisfaction.

B. I am very glad of it: for, we wanted you extremely to finiſh the ſubject we were talking of in the morning.

C. Since I parted with you, Sir, I heard a ſermon at ------, and I thought of you. the preacher ſpoke in a very edifying manner: but I queſtion whether the common people underſtood him, or not.

A. It happens but too often (as I heard an ingenious lady obſerve,) that our preachers ſpeak Latin, in Engliſh. the moſt eſſential quality of a good preacher is to be inſtructive: but he muſt have great abilities and experience to make him ſo. on the one hand he muſt be perfectly acquainted with the force of ſcripture-expreſſions: on the other, he muſt underſtand the capacity of thoſe to whom he preaches; and adapt himſelf to it. now this requires a ſolid knowledge, and great diſcernment. preachers ſpeak every day to people of the ſcripture, the church, the Moſaic law, the goſpel; of ſacrifices; of Moſes and Aaron, and Melchiſedec; of the prophets, and apoſtles: but there is not ſufficient

care taken to inſtruct the people in the true meaning of theſe things, and in the characters of thoſe holy perſons. one might follow ſome preachers, twenty years, without getting ſufficient knowledge of religion.

B. Do you think that people are really ignorant of thoſe things you mentioned?

C. For my part, I believe they are: and that few or none underſtand them enough to receive any benefit from ſermons.

B. That may be true of the loweſt rank of people.

C. Well; ought not they to be inſtructed as well as others? do not they make up the bulk of mankind?

A. The truth is, perſons of rank and faſhion have but little more knowledge of religion than the common people. there are always three fourth-parts of an ordinary audience, who do not know thoſe firſt principles of religion, in which the preacher ſuppoſes every one to be fully inſtructed.

B. Would you then have him explain the catechiſm in his ſermons to a polite congregation?

A. I grant there is a due regard to be had to an audience; and diſcretion to be uſed in adapting a diſcourſe to their capacity. but ſtill without giving the leaſt offence, a preacher might remind the moſt diſcerning hearers of thoſe paſſages of the ſacred hiſtory, which explain the origin and inſtitution of holy things. this way of having recourſe to the firſt foundations of religion, would be ſo far from ſeeming low, that it would

give moſt diſcourſes that force and beauty which they generally want. this is particularly true with regard to the myſteries of religion: for the hearers can never be inſtructed, nor perſuaded, if you do not trace things back to their ſource. for example, how can you make them underſtand what the church ſays, after † St. Paul, that Jeſus Chriſt is our Paſſover, if you do not explain to them the Jewiſh Paſſover, which was appointed to be a perpetual memorial of their deliverance from Egypt, and to typify a more important redemption that was reſerved for the Meſſiah. it is for this reaſon, I ſaid that almoſt every thing in religion is hiſtorical. and if preachers would have a full knowledge of this truth, they muſt be very converſant in the ſcripture----

B. You muſt excuſe my interrupting you on this ſubject; Sir, you told us in the morning that the ſcriptures are eloquent: and I was glad to hear you ſay ſo. let me intreat you to ſhew us how we may diſcern the beauties of ſcripture; and in what its eloquence conſiſts. the Latin Bible ſeems to me moſt vulgar and inaccurate. I ſee no delicacy in it. what is it then that you ſo much admire?

A. The Latin is only a literal verſion in which out of reſpect to the original, there are many Greek and Hebrew phraſes retained. do you deſpiſe Homer becauſe he has been ſorrily tranſlated into French?

B. But the Greek itſelf (which is the original lan-

† 1. Cor. v. 7.

guage of the New Teſtament) appears to me very coarſe and unpolite.

A. The apoſtles were not acquainted with the genuine Greek, but uſed that corrupted kind which prevailed among the Helleniſtical Jews. for this reaſon St. Paul ſays † 'I am rude in ſpeech,' but not in knowledge. it is very obvious that the apoſtle here only meant he was not a maſter of the Greek tongue; tho' he ſolidly explained the doctrine of the holy ſcripture.

C. Had not the apoſtles the gift of ſpeaking unknown tongues?

A. Undoubtedly: and they even conveyed that gift to great numbers of their illiterate converts. but as for the languages that the apoſtles had learnt in a natural way, we have reaſon to believe that the Spirit of God permitted them to ſpeak as they did before. St. Paul who was a citizen of Tarſus, in Cilicia, naturally ſpake the corrupted Greek uſed among the Jews there: and we find that this is the language he wrote in. St. Luke ſeems to have underſtood Greek a little better.

C. But I always thought that in the paſſage you mentioned, St. Paul gave up all pretences to oratory: and regarded nothing but the ſimplicity of the evangelical doctrine. nay I have heard ſeveral perſons of worth and good judgment affirm that the holy ſcripture is not eloquent. St. Jerom was puniſhed for being diſguſted at the ſimplicity of ſcripture; and liking Tully better.

† 2. Cor. xi. 16.

St. Auſtin (in his confeſſions) ſeems to have fallen into the ſame fault. did not God intend to try our faith by the obſcurity, and even by the lowneſs of the ſcripture-ſtile, as well as by the poverty of our Redeemer?

A. You ſeem, Sir, to carry this point too far. whether do you chuſe to believe St. Jerom when he was puniſhed for having followed his youthful ſtudies too cloſely in his retreat; or when he had made the greateſt progreſs both in ſacred and profane learning; and, in an epiſtle to Paulinus, invited him to ſtudy the ſcripture; aſſuring him that he would find more charms in the prophets than he had diſcovered in the heathen poets? or, was St. Auſtin's judgment better in his youth, when the ſeeming meanneſs of the ſacred ſtile diſguſted him; than when he compoſed his books Of the Chriſtian doctrine? there he often ſays that St. Paul was powerfully perſuaſive; and that the torrent of his eloquence muſt be perceived by the moſt unattentive reader. he adds that in the apoſtle, wiſdom did not ſeek after the beauty of language; but that the beauties of language offered themſelves, and attended his wiſdom. he quotes many lofty paſſages of his epiſtles; wherein he ſhews all the art and addreſs of the heathen orators far outdone. St. Auſtin excepts only two things in this compariſon: he ſays, that theſe orators ſtudyed the ornaments of eloquence; but that the beauties of oratory naturally followed St. Paul, and others of the ſacred writers. and then he owns that he did not ſuf-

ficiently underſtand the delicacies of the Greek tongue, to be a competent judge, whether there be the ſame numbers and cadence of periods in the ſacred text, that we meet with in profane authors. I forgot to tell you that he quotes that paſſage of the prophet Amos which begins thus † 'wo to them that are at eaſe in Zion, 'and truſt in the mountain of Samaria------:' and aſſures us that in this place the prophet has ſurpaſſed every thing that is ſublime in the heathen orators.

C. But how do you underſtand theſe words of St. Paul; ‡ 'my ſpeech and my preaching was not 'with the enticing (perſuaſive) words of man's wiſ-'dom----?' does he not tell the Corinthians that he came not to preach Chriſt to them, with the ſublimity of diſcourſe and of wiſdom: that he 'knew nothing a-'mong them but Jeſus, and him crucified:' that his preaching was founded not upon the perſuaſive language of human wiſdom, and learning, but upon the ſenſible effects of the Spirit and the power of God; to the end (as he adds) 'that their faith ſhould not depend 'upon the wiſdom of men, but on the power of God.' what is the meaning of theſe words, Sir? what ſtronger expreſſions could the apoſtle uſe to condemn this art of perſuaſion that you would eſtabliſh? for my part, I freely own that at firſt I was glad when you cenſured all thoſe affected ornaments of diſcourſe that vain declaimers are ſo fond of: but the ſequel of your ſcheme

† Ch. vi. ‡ 1 Cor. xi. 4.

does not anſwer the pious beginning of it. I find that you would ſtill make preaching a human art; and baniſh apoſtolical ſimplicity from the pulpit.

A. Tho' you judge very unfavourably of my eſteem for eloquence; I am not diſſatisfyed at the zeal with which you cenſure it. however, Sir, let us endeavour to underſtand one another aright. there are ſeveral worthy perſons who judge, with you, that eloquent preaching is repugnant to the ſimplicity of the goſpel. but when we have mutually explained our ſentiments, perhaps they may be found to agree. what then do you mean by ſimplicity? and what do you call eloquence?

C. By ſimplicity, I mean a diſcourſe without any artifice or magnificence. by eloquence, I mean a diſcourſe full of art and ornaments.

A. When you require an artleſs ſimple diſcourſe, would you have it without order, and connection: without ſolid and convincing proofs; and without a proper method for inſtructing the ignorant? would you have a preacher ſay nothing that is pathetic; and never endeavour to affect the heart?

C. Far from it: I would have a diſcourſe that both inſtructs, and moves people.

A. That would make it eloquent: for we have ſeen before that eloquence is the art of inſtructing and perſuading men, by moving their paſſions.

C. I grant that preachers ought to convince and

affect their hearers: but I would have them to do it without art, by an apoſtolical ſimplicity.

A. The more artleſs and natural ſuch a convincing perſuaſive eloquence is, it muſt be the more powerful. but let us enquire whether the art of perſuaſion be inconſiſtent with the ſimplicity of the goſpel. what mean you by art?

C. I mean a ſyſtem of rules that men have invented, and uſually obſerve in their diſcourſes; to make them more beautiful, elegant, and pleaſing.

A. If by art you only mean this invention to render a diſcourſe more handſome and poliſhed in order to pleaſe people; I will not diſpute with you about words; but will readily acknowledge that this art ought not to be admitted into ſermons: for, (as we agreed before) this vanity is unworthy of eloquence, and far more unbecoming the ſacred function. this is the very point about which I reaſoned ſo much with Mr. B. but if by art, and eloquence, you mean what the moſt judicious writers among the antients underſtood; we muſt then ſet a juſt value upon eloquence.

C. What did they underſtand by it?

A. According to them the art of eloquence comprehends thoſe means that wiſe reflection and experience have diſcovered to render a diſcourſe proper to perſuade men of the truth; and to engage them to love and obey it. and this is what you think every preacher ſhould be able to do. for did you not ſay that you ap-

proved of order, and a right manner of inſtruction; ſolidity of reaſoning, and pathetic movements; I mean ſuch as can touch and affect people's hearts? now this is what I call eloquence: you may give it what name you pleaſe.

C. Now I comprehend your notion of eloquence; and I cannot but acknowledge that ſuch a manly, grave, ſerious manner of perſuaſion would much become the pulpit; and that it ſeems even neceſſary to inſtruct people with ſucceſs. but how do you underſtand thoſe words of St. Paul that I quoted before? do they not expreſly condemn eloquence?

A. In order to explain the apoſtle's words, let me ask you a few queſtions.

C. As many as you pleaſe, Sir.

A. Is it not true that the apoſtle argues with wonderful ſtrength in his epiſtles? does he not reaſon finely againſt the heathen philoſophers, and the Jews, in his epiſtle to the Romans? is there not great force, in what he ſays concerning the inability of the Moſaic law to juſtify men?

C. Certainly.

A. Is there not a chain of ſolid reaſoning in his epiſtle to the Hebrews, about the inſufficiency of the antient ſacrifices; the reſt that David promiſed to the children of God, beſides that which the Iſraelites enjoyed in Paleſtine after Joſhua's days; concerning the order of Aaron, and that of Melchiſedec; and the ſpi-

ritual and eternal covenant that behoved to ſucceed the carnal and earthly one which was eſtabliſhed by the mediation of Moſes, for a time only? are not the apoſtle's arguments on theſe ſeveral ſubjects very ſtrong and concluſive?

C. I think they are.

A. When St. Paul therefore diſclaimed the uſe of 'the perſuaſive words of man's wiſdom,' he did not mean to condemn true wiſdom, and the force of reaſoning.

C. That appears plainly from his own example.

A. Why then do you think that he meant to condemn ſolid eloquence, any more than true wiſdom?

C. Becauſe he expreſly rejects eloquence in that paſſage which I deſired you to explain.

A. But doth he not likewiſe diſclaim wiſdom? the place ſeems to be more expreſs againſt wiſdom, and human reaſoning, than againſt eloquence. and yet he himſelf reaſoned frequently; and was very eloquent. you grant that he argued well: and St. Auſtin aſſures you that the apoſtle was an orator.

C. You plainly point out the difficulty; but you do not anſwer it. pray, ſhew us how it is to be ſolved.

A. St. Paul reaſoned much; he perſuaded effectually: ſo that he was really an excellent philoſopher and an orator. but as he tells us in the place you quoted; his preaching was not founded on human reaſoning, nor on the art of perſuaſion. it was a miniſtry of di-

vine inſtitution, that owed its efficacy to God alone. the converſion of the whole world was, according to the antient prophecies, to be the great and ſtanding miracle of the Chriſtian religion. this was the Kingdom of God that came from Heaven; and was to convert and reduce all the nations of the earth to the worſhip and ſervice of the true God. Jeſus Chriſt crucified, by his being declared to them was to draw them all to himſelf merely by the power of his croſs. the philoſophers had reaſoned and diſputed, without converting either themſelves, or others. the Jews had been intruſted with a law that ſhewed them their miſeries, but could not relieve them. all mankind were convinced of the general diſorder and corruption that reigned among them. Jeſus Chriſt came with his croſs; that is, he came poor, humble, and ſuffering for us. to ſilence our vain, preſumptuous reaſon, he did not argue like the philoſophers; but he determined with authority. by his miracles, and his grace, he ſhewed that he was above all. that he might confound the falſe wiſdom of men, he ſets before them the ſeeming folly and ſcandal of his croſs; that is, the example of his profound humiliation. that which mankind reckoned † folly, and at which they were moſt offended, was the very thing that ſhould convert and lead them to God. they wanted to be cured of their pride, and their exceſſive love of ſenſible objects: and to affect them the more, God

† 1 Cor. i, 23, 25.

ſhewed them his Son crucifyed. the apoſtles preached him; and walked in his ſteps. they had not recourſe to any human means, neither to philoſophy, nor rhetoric, nor policy, nor wealth, nor authority. God would have the ſole glory of his work; and the ſucceſs of it to depend entirely on himſelf: he therefore choſe what is weak; and rejected what is ſtrong; to diſplay his power in the moſt ſenſible manner. he brought all out of nothing in the converſion of the world, as well as at the creation of it. that work therefore had this divine character ſtamped upon it, that it was not founded upon any thing that the world admired, or valued. it would only have weakened and fruſtrated the wonderful power of the croſs (as ‡ St. Paul ſays) to ground the preaching of the goſpel upon natural means. it was neceſſary that without human help, the goſpel ſhould of itſelf open people's hearts; and by that prodigious efficacy ſhew mankind that it came from God. thus was human wiſdom confounded, and rejected. now what muſt we conclude from hence? this only; that the converſion of the nations, and the eſtabliſhment of the Chriſtian church, was not owing to the learned reaſonings, and perſuaſive words of man's wiſdom. it does not imply that there was no eloquence, nor wiſdom in ſeveral of thoſe who firſt preached the goſpel: but only, that they did not depend on this eloquent wiſdom; nor did they ſtudy it as a thing that was to

‡ 1 Cor. i. 17.

give an efficacy to their doctrine. it was founded (as the apoſtle tells us) † not upon the perſuaſive diſcourſes of human philoſophy; but ſolely upon the effects of the ſpirit, and the power of God; that is, upon the miracles that ſtruck the eyes and minds of men, and upon the inward operation of the divine grace.

C. According to your reaſoning then, they make void the efficacy of our Saviour's croſs who ground their preaching upon human wiſdom and eloquence.

A. Undoubtedly. the miniſtry of the word is intirely built upon faith: and the preachers of it ought to pray, and purify their hearts; and expect all their ſucceſs from heaven. they ſhould arm themſelves with 'the ſword of the Spirit, which is the word of God;' and not depend on their own abilities. this is the neceſſary preparation for preaching the goſpel. but tho' the inward fruit and ſucceſs of it muſt be aſcribed to grace alone, and the efficacy of God's word; there are yet ſome things that man is to do on his part.-----

C. Hitherto you have talked very ſolidly: but I ſee plainly you are now returning to your firſt opinion.

A. I did not change it. do not you believe that the work of our ſalvation depends upon God's grace?

C. Yes: it is an article of faith.

† Οὐκ ἐν πειθοῖς ἀνθρωπίνης σοφίας λόγοις——.
1 Cor. ii. 4.

A. You own however that we ought to uſe great prudence in chuſing a right ſtation and conduct in life; and in avoiding dangerous temptations. now do we make void the grace of God, and its efficacy, by watching, and prayer, and a prudent circumſpection? certainly not. we owe all to God: and yet he obliges us to comply with an external order of human means. the apoſtles did not ſtudy the vain pomp, and trifling ornaments of the heathen orators. they did not fall into the ſubtil reaſonings of the philoſophers, who made all to depend upon thoſe airy ſpeculations in which they loſt themſelves. the apoſtles only preached Jeſus Chriſt with all the force, and magnificent ſimplicity of the ſcripture-language. it is true they had no need of any preparation for their miniſtry; becauſe the Spirit, who deſcended upon them in a ſenſible manner, ſupplyed them with words in preaching the goſpel. the difference then betwixt the apoſtles, and their ſucceſſors in the miniſtry, is, that theſe, not being miraculouſly inſpired like the apoſtles, have need to prepare themſelves, and to fill their minds with the doctrine and ſpirit of the ſcripture, to form their diſcourſes. but this preparation ſhould never lead them to preach in a more artleſs manner than the apoſtles. would you not be ſatisfy'd if preachers us'd no more ornaments in their ſermons than St. Peter, St. Paul, St. James, St. Jude, and St. John did?

C. I think I ought to require no more, and I muſt

confeſs that ſince (as you ſay) eloquence conſiſts chiefly in the order, force, and propriety of the words by which men are perſuaded and moved; it does not give me ſo much offence as it did. I always reckoned eloquence to be an art that is inconſiſtent with the ſimplicity of the goſpel.

A. There are two ſorts of people that have this notion of it; the falſe orators, who are widely miſtaken in ſeeking after eloquence amidſt a vain pomp of words; and ſome pious perſons who have no great depth of knowledge: but tho' out of humility they avoid that falſe rhetoric which conſiſts in a gaudy oſtentatious ſtile; they yet aim at true eloquence, by ſtriving to perſuade, and move their hearers.

C. I now underſtand your notions exactly well: let us now return to the eloquence of the ſcripture.

A. In order to perceive it, nothing is more uſeful than to have a juſt taſte of the antient ſimplicity: and this may beſt be obtained by reading the moſt ‡ antient Greek authors. I ſay the moſt antient, for thoſe Greeks

‡ Ενδείκνυται δ' ἡμῖν ὅτος ὁ ἀνὴρ (ΠΛΑΤΩΝ) εἰ βυλοίμεθα μὴ κατολιγωρῆσαι, ὡς ϗ ἄλλη τις παρὰ τὰ εἰρημένα ὁδὸς ἐπὶ τὰ ὑψηλὰ τείνει. ποία δὲ ϗ τίς αὕτη; ἡ τῶν ἔμπροσθεν μεγάλων συγγραφέων ϗ ποιητῶν μίμησίς τε ϗ ζήλωσις. ϗ τούτῳ γε, φίλταλε, ἀπριξ ἐχωμίθα τῦ σκοπῦ.

Longinus. §. xiii.

whom the Romans ſo juſtly deſpiſed, and called Graeculi, were then intirely degenerate. as I told you before, you ought to be perfectly acquainted with Homer, Plato, Xenophon, and the other earlieſt writers. after that, you will be no more ſurpriſed at the plainneſs of the ſcripture-ſtile! for in them you will find almoſt the ſame kind of cuſtoms, the ſame artleſs narrations, the ſame images of great things, and the ſame movements. the difference betwixt them upon compariſon is much to the honour of the ſcripture. it ſurpaſſes them vaſtly in native ſimplicity, livelineſs, and grandeur. Homer himſelf never reached the ſublimity of Moſes's ſongs; eſpecially the † laſt, which all the Iſraelitiſh children

† 'Give ear, O ye heavens, 'and I will ſpeak: and hear 'O earth, the words of my 'mouth. my doctrine ſhall 'drop as the rain; my ſpeech 'ſhall diſtil as the dew; as the 'ſmall rain upon the tender 'herb; and as the ſhowers up-'on the graſs. becauſe I will 'publiſh the name of the 'Lord: aſcribe ye greatneſs 'unto our God. he is the 'rock: his work is perfect: 'for, all his ways are judg-'ment: a God of truth, and 'without iniquity: juſt and 'right is he.----for the Lord's 'portion is his people: Jacob 'is the lot of his inheritance. 'he found him in a deſart 'land; and in the waſte how-'ling wilderneſs: he led him 'about; he inſtructed him; 'and kept him as the apple of 'his eye. as an eagle ſtirreth 'up her neſt, fluttereth over 'her young, ſpreadeth abroad 'her wings; taketh them; 'beareth them on her wings: 'ſo the Lord alone did lead 'him; and there was no 'ſtrange god with him. he 'made him ride on the high 'places of the earth, that he

† Deut. xxxii. v. 1. 2. 3. 4. 9. 10. 11. 12. 13.

were to learn by-heart. never did any ode, either Greek, or Latin, come up to the loftineſs of the Pſalms: particularly that which begins thus; † 'The mighty God, 'even the Lord, hath ſpoken,' ſurpaſſes the utmoſt ſtretch of human invention. neither Homer nor any other poet ever equalled ‡ Iſaiah deſcribing the majeſty

'might eat the increaſe of the 'fields; he made him ſuck 'hony out of the rock; and 'oil out of the ſtinty rock.'---

† 'The mighty God, even 'the Lord, hath ſpoken; and 'called the earth from the ri-'ſing of the ſun unto the 'going down thereof. out of '*Zion*, the perfection of beau-'ty, God hath ſhined. our 'God ſhall come, and ſhall 'not keep ſilence: a fire ſhall 'devour before him: and it 'ſhall be very tempeſtuous 'round about him. he ſhall 'call to the heavens from a-'bove; and to the earth, that 'he may judge his people. 'gather my ſaints together 'unto me; thoſe that have 'made a covenant with me by 'ſacrifice. and the heavens 'ſhall declare his righteouſ-'neſs; for God is judge him-'ſelf.'

‡ Chap. xl. 9. 'O Zion, 'that bringeſt good tidings, 'get thee up into the high 'mountain: O Jeruſalem, that 'bringeſt good tidings, lift up 'thy voice with ſtrength: lift 'it up; be not afraid: ſay un-'to the cities of Judah, be-'hold your God. behold the 'Lord God will come with a 'ſtrong hand; and his arm 'ſhall rule for him; behold 'his reward is with him; and 'his work before him. he 'ſhall feed his flock like a 'ſhepherd: he ſhall gather the 'lambs with his arm, and car-'ry them in his boſom; and 'ſhall gently lead thoſe that 'are with young. who hath 'meaſured the waters in the 'hollow of his hand? and

† Pſal. L. 1. 2. 3. 4. 5. 6.

‡ Ver. 10. 11. 12. 13. 15. 16. 17. 18. 21. 22. 25. 26. 28.

of God, in whoſe ſight the 'nations of the earth are 'as the ſmall duſt; yea leſs than nothing, and vanity;' ſeeing it is 'He that ſtretcheth out the heavens like a 'curtain, and ſpreadeth them out as a tent to dwell 'in.' ſometimes this prophet has all the ſweetneſs of

'meted out the heaven with 'a ſpan, and comprehended 'the duſt of the earth in a 'meaſure; and weighed the 'mountains in ſcales; and the 'hills in a balance? who hath 'directed the Spirit of the 'Lord; or being his counſel-'ler hath taught him?----be-'hold the nations are as a 'drop of a bucket; and are 'counted as the ſmall duſt of 'the balance: behold he tak-'eth up the iſles as a very 'little thing. and Lebanon is 'not ſufficient to burn; nor 'the beaſts thereof ſufficient 'for a burnt-ſacrifice. all na-'tions before him are as no-'thing; and they are counted 'to him leſs than nothing and 'vanity. to whom will you lik-'en God? or what likeneſs will 'you compare unto him?---- 'have ye not known? have ye 'not heard? hath it not been 'told you from the beginning? 'have ye not underſtood from 'the foundations of the earth? 'it is he that ſitteth upon the 'circle of the earth; and the 'inhabitants thereof are as 'graſhoppers: that ſtretcheth 'out the heavens like a cur-'tain; and ſpreadeth them out 'as a tent to dwell in.----to 'whom then will you liken 'me, or ſhall I be equal? ſaith 'the holy One. lift up your 'eyes on high, and behold who 'hath created theſe things; 'that bringeth out their hoſt 'by number: he calleth them 'all by names, by the great-'neſs of his might; for that 'he is ſtrong in power, not 'one faileth.---haſt thou not 'known? haſt thou not heard, 'that the everlaſting God, the 'Lord, the Creator of the 'ends of the earth fainteth 'not; neither is weary? there 'is no ſearching of his under-'ſtanding!'

an eclogue, in the † ſmiling images he gives us of peace: and ſometimes he ſoars ſo high as to leave every thing below him. what is there in antiquity that can be compared to the ‡ Lamentations of Jeremiah when he ten-

† See ch. xi. and xxxv.

‡ Chap. i. 1. 'How doth 'the city ſit ſolitary, that was 'full of people! how is ſhe 'become as a widow! ſhe that 'was great among the nations, 'and princeſs among the pro- 'vinces, how is ſhe become 'tributary! ſhe weepeth ſore in 'the night; and her tears are 'on her cheeks. among all her 'lovers ſhe hath none to com- 'fort her: all her friends have 'dealt treacherouſly with her; 'they are become her ene- 'mies.——for theſe things I 'weep: mine eye, mine eye, 'runneth down with water; 'becauſe the comforter that 'ſhould relieve my ſoul is far 'from me: my children are 'deſolate; becauſe the enemy 'prevailed.---behold, O Lord; 'for I am in diſtreſs; my 'bowels are troubled: mine 'heart is turned within me; 'for I have grievouſly rebel- 'led: *abroad* the ſword bere- 'veth; at *home* there is as 'death,---how hath the Lord 'covered the daughter of Zion 'with a cloud in his anger; 'and caſt down from heaven 'unto the earth the beauty of 'Iſrael; and remembered not 'his foot-ſtool in the day of 'his anger!----the Lord hath 'purpoſed to deſtroy the wall 'of the daughter of Zion: he 'hath ſtretched out a line; he 'hath not withdrawn his hand 'from deſtroying: therefore 'he made the rampart, and 'the wall to lament; they 'languiſhed together.---mine 'eyes do fail with tears, my 'bowels are troubled: my li- 'ver is poured upon the earth, 'for the deſtruction of the 'daughter of my people: be- 'cauſe the children and the 'ſucklings ſwoon in the ſtreets 'of the city. they ſay to their 'mothers, where is corn and

‡ V. 2. 16. 20. ch. ii. 1. 8. 11. 12. 19. 20. 21. ch. iii. 39.

derly deplores the miſeries of his country? or to the prophecy of † Nahum when he foreſees in ſpirit the

'wine? when they ſwooned as 'the wounded in the ſtreets 'of the city; when their ſoul 'was poured out into their 'mother's boſom.-------ariſe; 'cry out in the night; in the 'beginning of the watches 'pour out thine heart like 'water before the face of the 'Lord: lift up thy hands to-'wards him, for the life of 'thy young children, that 'faint for hunger in the top 'of every ſtreet. behold, O 'Lord, and conſider to whom 'thou haſt done this. ſhall the 'women eat their fruit, chil-'dren of a ſpan long? ſhall 'the prieſt and the prophet be 'ſlain in the ſanctuary of the 'Lord? the young and the 'old lie on the ground in the 'ſtreets: my virgins and my 'young men are fallen by the 'ſword: thou haſt ſlain them 'in the day of thine anger, 'thou haſt killed and not pi-'tyed. wherefore doth a living 'man complain; a man for the 'puniſhment of his ſins?'----

† Chap. i. 3. 'The Lord 'is ſlow to anger, and great in 'power; and will not at all ac-'quit the wicked. the Lord 'hath his way in the whirl-'wind, and in the ſtorm; and 'the clouds are the duſt of his 'feet.---the mountains quake 'at him; and the hills melt; 'and the earth is burnt at his 'preſence; yea the world, and 'all that dwell therein. who 'can ſtand before his indigna-'tion? and who can abide in 'the fierceneſs of his anger? 'his fury is poured out like 'fire; and the rocks are thrown 'down by him. he that daſh-'eth in pieces is come up be-'fore thy face: keep the mu-'nition: watch the way: make 'thy loyns ſtrong: fortify thy 'power mightily.---the ſhield 'of his mighty men is made 'red; the valiant men are in 'ſcarlet: the chariots ſhall be 'with flaming torches, in the 'day of his preparation; and 'the fir-trees ſhall be terribly 'ſhaken. the chariots ſhall rage

† V. 5. 6. ch. ii. 1. 3. 4. 8. 9. 10. ch. iii. 3. 13. 17. 18.

proud Nineveh fall under the rage of an invincible army. we fancy that we ſee the army, and hear the noiſe of arms and chariots. every thing is painted in ſuch a lively manner as ſtrikes the imagination. the prophet far out-does Homer. read likewiſe ‡ Daniel denouncing to Belſhazzar the divine vengeance ready to overwhelm him: and try if you can find any thing in the moſt ſublime originals of antiquity that can be compa-

' in the ſtreets; they ſhall juſtle
' one againſt another in the
' broad ways: they ſhall ſeem
' like torches: they ſhall run
' like the lightnings.——but
' Nineveh is of old like a pool
' of water: yet they ſhall flee
' away. ſtand, ſtand, ſhall they
' cry; but none ſhall look
' back. take ye the ſpoil of
' ſilver; take the ſpoil of gold:
' for there is no end of the
' ſtore, and glory out of the
' pleaſant furniture. ſhe is
' empty, and void, and waſte;
' and the heart melteth; and
' the knees ſmite together;
' and much pain is in all
' loyns; and the faces of them
' all gather blackneſs.——the
' horſeman lifteth up both the
' bright ſword, and the glit-
' tering ſpear; and there is a
' multitude of ſlain, and a
' great number of carcaſes;
' and there is no end of their
' corpſes: they ſtumble upon
' their corpſes.——behold thy
' people in the midſt of thee
' are women: the gates of thy
' land ſhall be ſet wide open
' unto thine enemies: the fire
' ſhall devour thy bars.——
' thy crowned are as the lo-
' cuſts; and thy captains as
' the great graſhoppers which
' camp in the hedges in the
' cold day; but when the ſun
' ariſeth they flee away; and
' their place is not known
' where they are. thy ſhep-
' herds ſlumber, O king of
' Aſſyria: thy nobles ſhall
' dwell in the duſt: thy people
' is ſcattered upon the moun-
' tains: and no man gather-
' eth them.'——

‡ *Ch.* v. 15—29.

red to thoſe paſſages of ſacred writ. as for the * reſt of ſcripture, every portion of it is uniform and conſiſtent; every part bears the peculiar character that becomes it; the hiſtory, the particular detail of laws, the deſcriptions, the vehement and pathetic paſſages, the myſteries, and prophecies, and moral diſcourſes; in all theſe there appears a natural and beautiful variety. in ſhort, there is as great a difference betwixt the heathen poets, and the prophets; as there is betwixt a falſe enthuſiaſm, and the true. the ſacred writers, being truly inſpired, do in a ſenſible manner expreſs ſomething divine: while the others, ſtriving to ſoar above themſelves, always ſhew human weakneſs in their loftieſt flights. the ſecond book of Maccabees, the book of Wiſdom eſpecially at the end; and Eccleſiaſticus in the beginning, diſcover the † gaudy ſwelling ſtile that the degenerate

* *See the letter to the Academy.*

† Wiſdom. ch. xvii. 17.—'They were all bound with 'one chain of darkneſs: whether it were a whiſtling 'wind, or a melodious noiſe 'of birds among the ſpreading branches; or a pleaſing 'fall of water running violently: or a terrible ſound 'of ſtones caſt down; or a 'running that could not be 'ſeen of skipping beaſts, or a 'roaring voice of moſt ſavage 'wild beaſts; or a rebounding 'echo from the hollow mountains: theſe things made 'them to ſwoon for fear.—Ch. xviii. 20. 'Yea the taſting of death touched the 'righteous alſo, and there 'was a deſtruction of the 'multitude in the wilderneſs: 'but the wrath endured not 'long. for then the blameleſs

Greeks had ſpread over the eaſt; where their language was eſtabliſhed with their dominion. but it would be in vain to enlarge upon all theſe particulars: it is by reading that you muſt diſcover the truth of them.

B. I long to ſet about it: we ought to apply ourſelves to this kind of ſtudy, more than we do.

C. I eaſily conceive that the Old Teſtament is written with that magnificence; and thoſe lively images you ſpeak of. but you ſay nothing of the ſimplicity of Chriſt's words.

A. That ſimplicity of ſtile is intirely according to the antient taſte. it is agreeable both to Moſes and the prophets, whoſe expreſſions Chriſt often uſes. but tho' his language be plain and familiar, it is however figurative and ſublime in many places. I could eaſily ſhew by particular inſtances, (if we had the books here to conſult,) that we have not a preacher of this age who is ſo figurative in his moſt ſtudyed ſermons, as Jeſus

'man made haſte and ſtood forth to defend them; and bringing the ſhield of his proper miniſtry, even prayer and the propitiation of incenſe, ſet himſelf againſt the wrath, and ſo brought the calamity to an end; declaring that he was thy ſervant. ſo he overcame the deſtroyer, not with ſtrength of body, nor force of arms, but with a word ſubdued he him that puniſhed, alledging the oaths and covenants made with the fathers.--for in the *long garment*, was the *whole world*: and in the four rows of the ſtones, was the glory of the fathers graven: and thy majeſty upon the diadem of his head.'

Chriſt was in his moſt popular diſcourſes. I do not mean thoſe that St. John relates, where almoſt every thing is ſenſibly divine: I ſpeak of his moſt familiar diſcourſes recorded by the other evangeliſts. the apoſtles wrote in the ſame manner; with this difference; that Jeſus Chriſt being maſter of his doctrine, delivers it calmly. he ſays juſt what he pleaſes; and ſpeaks, with the utmoſt eaſineſs, of the heavenly kingdom and glory, as of his * father's houſe. all thoſe exalted things that aſtoniſh us, were natural and familiar to him: he is born there; and only tells us what he † ſaw; as he himſelf declares. on the contrary the apoſtles ‡ ſunk under the weight of the truths that were revealed to them: they want words, and are not able to expreſs their ideas. hence flow thoſe digreſſions and obſcure paſſages in St. Paul's writings, and thoſe tranſpoſitions of his thoughts, which ſhew his mind was tranſported with the abundance and greatneſs of the truths that offered themſelves to his attention. all this irregularity of ſtile ſhews that the ſpirit of God forcibly guided the minds of the apoſtles. but notwithſtanding theſe little diſorders of their ſtile, every thing in it is noble, lively, and moving. as for St. John's Revelation, we find in it the ſame grandeur and enthuſiaſm that there is in the prophets. the expreſſions are oftimes the ſame: and ſometimes this reſemblance of ſtile gives a mutual light to them both. you ſee therefore that the

* Joh. xiv. 2. † *Ch.* viii. 38. ‡ 2 Cor. xii. 2, 4, 7.

eloquence of ſcripture is not confined to the books of the Old Teſtament; but is likewiſe to be found in the New.

C. Suppoſing the ſcripture to be eloquent, what will you conclude from it?

A. That thoſe who preach it, may, without ſcruple, imitate, or rather, borrow, its eloquence.

C. We find that preachers do chuſe thoſe paſſages they think moſt beautiful.

A. But it mangles the ſcripture thus to ſhew it to Chriſtians only in ſeparate paſſages. and however great the beauty of ſuch paſſages may be, it can never be fully perceived unleſs one knows the connection of them: for, every thing in ſcripture is connected: and this coherence is the moſt great and wonderful thing to be ſeen in the ſacred writings. for want of a due knowledge of it, preachers miſtake thoſe beautiful paſſages; and put upon them what ſenſe they pleaſe. they content themſelves with ſome ingenious interpretations; which being arbitrary, have no force to perſuade men, and to reform their manners.

B. What would you have preachers to do? muſt they uſe only the language of ſcripture?

A. I would have them at leaſt not think it enough to join together a few paſſages of ſcripture that have no real connection. I would have them explain the principles, and the ſeries of the ſcripture-doctrine; and take the ſpirit, the ſtile, and the figures of it; that all their diſcourſes may ſerve to give people a

right underſtanding, and true reliſh of God's word. there needs no more to make preachers eloquent: for by doing this, they would imitate the beſt model of antient eloquence.

B. But in this caſe we behoved (as I ſaid before) to explain the ſeveral parts of ſcripture as they lie.

A. I would not confine all preachers to this. one might make ſermons upon the ſcripture without explaining the ſeveral parts of it, as they lie. but it muſt be owned, that preaching would be quite another thing, if according to antient cuſtom, the ſacred books were thus explained to the people in a connected judicious manner. conſider what authority a man muſt have who ſhould ſay nothing from his own invention; but only follow and explain the thoughts and words of God. beſides he would do two things at once. by unfolding the truths of ſcripture, he would explain the text; and accuſtom the people to join always the ſenſe and the letter together. what advantage muſt they not reap if they were uſed to nouriſh themſelves with this ſpiritual bread? an audience who had heard the chief points of the Moſaic law explained, would be able to receive far more benefit from an explication of the truths of the goſpel, than the greateſt part of Chriſtians are now. the preacher we ſpoke of before, has this failing among many great qualities, that his ſermons are trains of fine reaſoning about religion; but they are not religion itſelf. we apply ourſelves too much to drawing of moral

characters, and inveighing againſt the general diſorders of mankind; and we do not ſufficiently explain the principles and precepts of the goſpel.

C. Preachers chuſe this way, becauſe it is far eaſier to declaim againſt the follies and diſorders of mankind, than to explain the fundamental truths and duties of religion judiciouſly. to be able to deſcribe the corruptions of the age, they need only have ſome knowledge of men, and things; and proper words to paint them. but to ſet the great duties of the goſpel in a juſt light, requires an attentive meditation and ſtudy of the holy ſcriptures. there are but few preachers who have ſuch a ſolid comprehenſive knowledge of religion as can enable them to explain it clearly to others. nay, there are ſome who make pretty diſcourſes; and yet could not catechiſe the people, and far leſs make a good homily.

A. Very true; it is here that our preachers are moſt defective. moſt of their fine ſermons contain only philoſophical reaſonings. ſometimes they prepoſterouſly quote ſcripture only for the ſake of decency or ornament: and it is not then regarded as the word of God; but as the invention of men.

C. You will grant, I hope, that the labours of ſuch men tend to make void the croſs of Chriſt.

A. I give them up; and contend only for the eloquence of ſcripture which evangelical preachers ought to imitate. ſo that we are agreed on this point: provided you will not excuſe ſome zealous preachers, who

under pretence of apoſtolical ſimplicity, do not effectually ſtudy either the doctrine of ſcripture, or the powerful manner of perſuaſion that we are taught there. they imagine that they need only bawl, and ſpeak often of hell and the devil. now without doubt a preacher ought to affect people by ſtrong, and ſometimes even by terrible images: but it is from the ſcripture that he ſhould learn to make powerful impreſſions. there he may clearly diſcover the way to make ſermons plain and popular, without loſing the force and dignity they ought always to have. for want of this knowledge a preacher oftentimes doth but ſtun and frighten people: ſo that they remember but few clear notions: and even the impreſſions of terror they received, are not laſting. this miſtaken ſimplicity that ſome affect, is too often a cloak for ignorance: and at beſt it is ſuch an unedifying manner of addreſs, as cannot be acceptable either to God, or men. nothing can excuſe ſuch homely preachers, but the ſincerity of their intentions. they ought to have ſtudyed and meditated much upon the word of God, before they undertook to preach. a prieſt who underſtands the ſcripture fully, and has the gift of ſpeaking, ſupported by the authority of his function, and of a good life, might make excellent diſcourſes without great preparation. for one ſpeaks eaſily of ſuch truths as make a clear and ſtrong impreſſion on his mind. now above all things, ſuch a ſubject as religion muſt furniſh exalted thoughts; and excite the nobleſt

ſentiments: and this is the deſign of eloquence. but a preacher ought to ſpeak to his audience as a father would talk to his children, with an affectionate tenderneſs: and not like a declaimer, pronouncing an harangue with ſtiffneſs, and an affected delicacy. it were to be wiſhed indeed that, generally ſpeaking, none were allowed to feed the Chriſtian flocks but their reſpective ſhepherds, who ought beſt to know their wants, in order to this, none ſhould be choſen for paſtors, but ſuch as have the gift of preaching. the neglect of this occaſions two evils: one is, that dumb paſtors, and ſuch as ſpeak without abilities are little eſteemed. another evil is, that the function of voluntary preachers allures many vain, ambitious ſpirits, that endeavour to diſtinguiſh themſelves this way. you know that in former ages the miniſtry of the word was reſerved for the biſhops; eſpecially in the weſtern church. you muſt have heard of St. Auſtin's caſe; that contrary to the eſtabliſhed rule, he was obliged to preach while he was only a presbyter; becauſe that Valerius, his biſhop and predeceſſor, was a ſtranger who could not talk eaſily: this was the beginning of that cuſtom in the weſtern parts. in the eaſt, prieſts ſooner began to preach; as appears from St. Chryſoſtom's ſermons which he made at Antioch, when he was only a presbyter.

C. I grant that generally ſpeaking the office of preaching ſhould be reſerved for the parochial-clergy. this would be the way to reſtore to the pulpit that

ſimplicity and dignity that ought to adorn it. for if paſtors joined the knowledge of the ſcriptures to their experience in the miniſterial function, and the conduct of ſouls; they would ſpeak in ſuch a way as is beſt adapted to the wants of their flocks. whereas thoſe preachers who give up themſelves chiefly to ſtudy and ſpeculation, are leſs able to obviate people's prejudices and miſtakes: they do not ſuit their diſcourſes to vulgar capacities: and inſiſt chiefly on ſuch general points as do not inſtruct nor affect men: to ſay nothing of the weight and influence that the ſhepherd's own voice muſt have among his flock, above a ſtranger's. theſe, methinks, are convincing reaſons for preferring a paſtor's ſermons before other people's. of what uſe are ſo many young preachers, without experience, without knowledge, and without piety? it were better to have fewer ſermons, and more judicious ones.

B. But there are many prieſts who are not paſtors, and who preach with great ſucceſs. how many perſons are there of the religious orders, who fill the pulpit to advantage?

C. I own there are many: and ſuch men ought to be made paſtors of pariſhes; and even be conſtrained to undertake the care of ſouls. were not Anchorets of old forced from their beloved ſolitude, and raiſed to public ſtations? that the light of their piety might ſhine in the church and edify the faithful?

A. But it does not belong to us to regulate the diſ-

cipline of the church. every age has its proper cuſtoms, as the circumſtances of things require. let us ſhew a regard to whatever the church tolerates: and without indulging a cenſorious humour, let us finiſh our character of a worthy preacher.

C. What you have ſaid already gives me, I think, an exact idea of it.

A. Let us hear then what you reckon neceſſary to make a compleat preacher.

C. I think that he ought to have ſtudied ſolidly, during his younger days, whatever is moſt uſeful in the poetry and eloquence of the † antients.

A. That is not neceſſary. it is true when one has finiſhed ſuch ſtudies ſucceſsfully, they may be of uſe to him, even towards a right underſtanding of the ſcriptures: as St. Paul has ſhewn in a treatiſe he compoſed on this very ſubject. but after all, this ſort of ſtudy is rather uſeful than neceſſary. in the firſt ages of the church, the clergy found a want of this kind of learning. thoſe indeed who had applyed themſelves to it, in their youth, turned it to the ſervice of religion, when

† *The* Greek *and* Roman *authors have a ſpirit in them, a force both of thought and expreſſion, that latter ages have not been able to imitate:* Buchanan *only excepted; in whom, more particularly in his* Pſalms, *there is a beauty, and life, an exactneſs as well as a liberty, that cannot be imitated, and ſcarce enough commended.* Diſcourſe of the paſtoral care. *ch.* viii.

they became paſtors: but ſuch as had neglected theſe ſtudies before, were not permitted to follow them, when they had once engaged themſelves in the ſtudy of the ſacred writings; which were then reckoned to be ſufficient. hence came that paſſage in the † apoſtolical conſtitutions, which exhorts Chriſtians not to read the heathen authors. 'if you want hiſtory (ſays that book,) 'or laws, or moral precepts, or eloquence, or poetry, 'you will find them all in the ſcriptures.' in effect we have already ſeen that it is needleſs to ſeek elſewhere, for any thing that is neceſſary to form our taſte and judgment of true eloquence. St. Auſtin ſays that the ſmaller ſtock we have of other learning, we ought ſo much the more to enrich ourſelves out of that ſacred treaſure: and that ſeeing our notions are too ſcanty to expreſs divine things in a proper way, we have need to exalt and improve our knowledge, by the authority of ſcripture; and our language, by the dignity of its expreſſions. but I aſk your pardon for interrupting you. go on, Sir, if you pleaſe.

C. Well then; let us be content with the ſufficiency of ſcripture. but ſhall we not add the fathers?

A. Without doubt: they are the channels of tradition. it is by their writings that we learn the manner in which the church interpreted the ſcripture in all ages.

C. But are preachers obliged to explain every paſſage of ſcripture according to the interpretations that

† B. I. c. 6.

the fathers have given us. we find that one father gives a ſpiritual or myſtical ſenſe; and another gives a literal one. now which muſt we chuſe? for there would be no end of mentioning them all.

A. When I affirm that we ought to interpret the ſcripture according to the doctrine of the fathers; I mean, their conſtant and uniform doctrine. they frequently gave pious interpretations that differed very much from the literal ſenſe; and were not founded on the prophetical alluſions, and the myſterious doctrines of religion. now ſeeing theſe interpretations are arbitrary, we are not obliged to follow them; 'ſeeing they 'did not follow one another.' but in thoſe places where they explain the ſentiments of the church concerning points of faith or practice; it is not allowable to explain the ſcripture in a ſenſe contrary to the doctrine of the fathers. this is the authority that we ought to aſcribe to them.

C. This ſeems clear enough. I would therefore have a clergyman (before he begin to preach) be thoroughly acquainted with the doctrine of the fathers, that he may follow it. I would even have him ſtudy the principles they laid down for their conduct; their rules of moderation; and their method of inſtruction.

A. Right: they are our maſters. they had an exalted genius: they had great and pious ſouls, full of heroical ſentiments. they had a ſingular knowledge of the tempers and manners of men: and acquired a great

repute; and a very eaſy way of preaching. we even find that many of them were very polite, and knew whatever is decent, either in writing or ſpeaking in public; and what is handſome both in familiar converſation, and in diſcharging the common duties of life. doubtleſs all this muſt have conduced to render them eloquent; and fit to gain upon people's minds. accordingly we find in their writings a politeneſs not only of language, but of ſentiments and manners; which is not to be ſeen in the writers of the following ages. this juſt taſte and diſcernment, (which agrees perfectly well with ſimplicity, and rendered their perſons acceptable, and their behaviour engaging) was highly ſerviceable to religion. and in this point we can ſcarce imitate them enough. ſo that after the ſcriptures, the knowledge of the fathers will help a preacher to compoſe good ſermons.

C. When one has laid ſuch a ſolid foundation, and edifyed the church by his exemplary virtues; he would then be fit to explain the goſpel with great authority, and good effect. for, by familiar inſtructions, and uſeful conferences, (to which we ſuppoſe him to have been accuſtomed betimes,) he muſt have attained a ſufficient freedom and eaſineſs of ſpeaking. now if ſuch paſtors applyed themſelves to all the particular duties of their function, as adminiſtring the ſacraments; directing pious ſouls; and comforting afflicted, or dying perſons; it is certain they could not have much time to make

elaborate ſermons, and learn them word for word: † 'the mouth behoved to ſpeak from the abundance 'of the heart;' and communicate to the people the fulneſs of goſpel-knowledge, and the affecting ſentiments of the preacher. as for what you ſaid yeſterday, about getting ſermons by-heart; I had the curioſity to ſeek out a paſſage in St. Auſtin that I had read before: it is to this purpoſe. 'he thinks that a preacher ought 'to ſpeak in a more plain and ſenſible manner than o-'ther people: for, ſeeing cuſtom and decency will not 'permit his hearers to ask him any queſtions; he ſhould 'be afraid of not adapting his diſcourſe to their capa-'city. wherefore (ſays he) they who get their ſermons 'by heart, word for word, and ſo cannot repeat and 'explain a truth till they ſee that their hearers under-'ſtand it, muſt loſe one great end and benefit of preach-'ing.' you ſee by this, Sir, that St. Auſtin only prepared his ſubject, without burdening his memory with all the words of his ſermons. tho' the precepts of true eloquence ſhould require more; yet the rules of the goſpel-miniſtry will not permit us to go farther. as for my own part, I have been long of your opinion concerning this matter; becauſe of the many preſſing neceſſities in the Chriſtian church, that require a paſtor's continual application. while a prieſt, who ought to be ‡ 'a man of God, thorowly furniſhed unto all 'good works,' ſhould be diligent in rooting out igno-

† Matth. xii. 34. ‡ 2. Tim. iii. 17.

rance and offences from the field of the church; I think it unworthy of him to waſte his time in his cloſet, in ſmoothing of periods; giving delicate touches to his deſcriptions; and inventing quaint diviſions. when one falls into the method and employment of theſe pretty preachers, he can have no time to do any thing elſe; he applys himſelf to no other buſineſs, or uſeful kind of ſtudy: nay to refreſh himſelf, he is oftentimes forced to preach the ſame ſermons over and over again. but what kind of eloquence can a preacher pretend to, when his hearers know before-hand all the expreſſions, and pathetic figures he will uſe. this is a likely way indeed to ſurprize, and aſtoniſh; to ſoften, and move and perſuade them. this muſt be a ſtrange manner of concealing one's art; and of letting nature ſpeak. to tell you freely, Sir, this gives me great offence. what! ſhall a diſpenſer of the divine myſteries be an idle declaimer, jealous of his reputation, and fond of † vain

† Sed his ornatus (repetam enim) virilis, fortis et ſanctus ſit----non debet quiſquam ubi *maxima* rerum *momenta* verſantur, de verbis eſſe ſollicitus----prima virtus eſt vitio carere. igitur ante omnia, ne ſperemus ornatam orationem fore, quae probabilis non erit. *probabile* autem, Cicero id genus dicit, quod non plus, minuſve eſt quam decet. non quia comi expolirique non debeat; nam et haec ornatus pars eſt: ſed quia vitium eſt, ubique quod nimium eſt. itaque vult eſſe autoritatem et pondus in verbis: ſententias vel graves, vel aptas opinionibus hominum ac moribus.

Quintil, *lib.* viii. *c.* 3.

pomp? ſhall he not dare to ſpeak of God to his people, without having ranged all his words, and learned his leſſon by heart like a ſchool-boy?

A. I am very much pleaſed with your zeal. what you ſay is true. but we muſt not however inveigh againſt this abuſe with too much violence: for, we ought to ſhew a regard to perſons of worth and piety, who, out of deference to cuſtom, or being prepoſſeſt by example, have with a good deſign fallen into the method that you juſtly cenſure. but I am aſhamed to interrupt you ſo often. go on, I beſeech you.

C. I would have a preacher explain the whole plan of religion; and unfold every part of it, in the moſt intelligible manner; by ſhewing the primitive inſtitution of things; and pointing out the ſequel and tradition of them: that by ſhewing the origin and eſtabliſhment of religion, he might deſtroy the objections of unbelievers, without offering to attack them openly; leſt he ſhould thereby lay a ſtumbling-block in the way of illiterate well-meaning Chriſtians.

A. That is very right. the beſt way of proving the truth of religion, is to explain it juſtly: for it carries its own evidence along with it, when we repreſent it in its native purity. all other proofs that are not drawn from the very foundation of religion itſelf, and the manner of its propagation, are but foreign to it. thus, for inſtance, the beſt proof of the creation of the world, of the deluge, and the miracles of Moſes, may be drawn

from the nature of thoſe miracles; and the artleſs impartial manner in which the Moſaic hiſtory is written, a wiſe unprejudiced perſon needs only to read it, to be fully convinced of its truth.

C. I would likewiſe have a preacher aſſiduouſly explain to the people in a connected train not only all the particular precepts and myſteries of the goſpel; but likewiſe the origin and inſtitution of the ſacraments; the traditions, the diſcipline, the liturgy, and ceremonies of the church. by theſe inſtructions he would guard the faithful againſt the objections of heretics; and enable them to give an account of their faith: and even to affect ſuch heretics as are not obſtinate: he would ſtrengthen people's faith, give them an exalted notion of religion; and make them receive ſome edification and benefit from what they ſee in the church. whereas with the ſuperficial inſtruction that is generally given them at preſent, they comprehend little or nothing of what they ſee; and have but a very confuſed idea of what they hear from the preacher. it is chiefly for the ſake of this connected ſcheme of inſtruction that I would have fixed perſons, ſuch as paſtors, to preach in every pariſh. I have often obſerved that there is no art, nor ſcience, that is not taught coherently by principles and method, in a connected train of inſtructions. religion is the only thing that is not taught thus to Chriſtians. in their childhood they have a little, dry catechiſm put into their hands, which they learn by-rote, without un-

derſtanding the ſenſe of it. and after that, they have no other inſtruction but what they can gather from ſermons upon unconnected general ſubjects. I would therefore, (as you ſaid) have preachers teach people the firſt principles of their religion; and by a due method, lead them on to the higheſt myſteries of it.

A. That was the antient way. they began with catechizing: after which, paſtors taught their people the ſeveral doctrines of the goſpel, in a connected train of homilies. this inſtructed Chriſtians fully in the word of God: you know St. Auſtin's book, of 'catechizing the 'ignorant;' and St. Clement's tract, which he compoſed to ſhew the Heathen whom he converted what were the doctrines and manners of the Chriſtian philoſophy. in thoſe days the greateſt men were employed in theſe catechetical inſtructions; and accordingly they produced ſuch wonderful effects, as ſeem quite incredible to us.

C. In fine, I would have every preacher make ſuch ſermons as ſhould not be too troubleſome to him; that ſo he might be able to preach often. they ought therefore to be ſhort; that without fatiguing himſelf or wearying the people he might preach every Sunday, after the goſpel. as far as we can judge, thoſe aged biſhops who lived in former times and had conſtant labours to employ them, did not make ſuch a ſtir as our modern preachers do in talking to the people in the midſt of divine ſervice; which the biſhops them-

ſelves read ‡ ſolemnly every Lord's day. a preacher now-a-days gets little credit unleſs he comes out of the pulpit ſweating and breathleſs; and unable to do any thing the reſt of the day. the biſhop's upper veſtment (which was not then opened at the ſhoulders as it is now, but hung equally down on all ſides,) probably hindered him from moving his arms, as ſome preachers do. ſo that as their ſermons were ſhort, ſo their action muſt have been grave and moderate. now, Sir, is not all this agreeable to your principles? is not this the idea you gave us of good preaching?

A. It is not mine: it is the current notion of all an-

‡ *A clergyman muſt bring his mind to an inward and feeling ſenſe of thoſe things that are* prayed *for in our* offices: *this will make him pronounce them with an equal meaſure of gravity and affection; and with a due ſlowneſs, and emphaſis. I do not love the theatrical way of the church of* Rome, *in which it is a great ſtudy, and a long practice, to learn in every one of their offices, how they ought to compoſe their looks, geſture and voice: yet a light wandering of the eyes, and a haſty running through the* prayers, *are things highly unbecoming: they very much leſſen the majeſty of our worſhip; and give our enemies advantage to call it* dead *and* formal; *when they ſee plainly that he who officiates, is dead and formal in it. a deep ſenſe of the things prayed for, a true recollection and attention of ſpirit, and a holy earneſtneſs of ſoul, will give a compoſure to the looks, and a weight to the pronunciation, that will be tempered between affectation on the one hand, and levity on the other.*

Diſcourſe of the paſtoral care. *ch.* viii.

tiquity. the farther I inquire into this matter, the more I am convinced that the antient form of ſermons was the moſt perfect. the primitive paſtors were great men: they were not only very holy, but they had a compleat clear knowledge of religion, and of the beſt way to perſuade men of its truth: and they took care to regulate all the circumſtances of it. there is a great deal of wiſdom, hidden under this air of ſimplicity: and we ought not to believe that a better method could have been afterwards found out. you have ſet this whole matter in the beſt light, and have left me nothing to add: indeed you have explained my thoughts better than I ſhould have done myſelf.

B. You magnify the eloquence, and the ſermons of the fathers mightily.

A. I do not think that I commend them too much.

B. I am ſurpriſed to ſee, that after you have been ſo ſevere againſt thoſe orators who mix turns of wit with their diſcourſes, you ſhould be ſo indulgent to the fathers, whoſe writings are full of jingling antitheſes, and quibbles, intirely contrary to all your rules. I wiſh you would be conſiſtent with yourſelf. pray, Sir, unfold all this to us. particularly, what do you think of Tertullian?

A. There are many excellent things in him. the loftineſs of his ſentiments is ofttimes admirable. beſides he ſhould be read for the ſake of ſome principles concerning tradition; ſome hiſtorical facts; and the diſci-

pline of his time. but as for his ſtile, I do not pretend to juſtify it. he has many falſe and obſcure notions; many harſh and perplexed metaphors: and the generality of readers are moſt fond of his faults. he has † ſpoiled many preachers. for, the deſire of ſaying

† *One of the greateſt and moſt remarkable proofs of the ſtrong influence that ſome imaginations have over others, is the power that ſome others have to perſuade, without any proof. for example, the turn of words that we find in* Tertullian, Seneca, Montaigne, *and ſome other authors, has ſo many charms, and ſo much luſtre, that they dazle moſt readers---their* words, *however inſignificant, have more force than the* reaſons *of other people---I proteſt I have a great value for ſome of* Tertullian's *works; and chiefly for his* apology *againſt the* Gentiles; *his book of* preſcriptions *againſt heretics; and for ſome paſſages of* Seneca; *tho' I have very little eſteem for* Montaigne. Tertullian *was indeed a man of great learning: but he had more memory, than judgment---the regard he ſhewed to the viſions of* Montanus, *and his prophecteſſes, is an unqueſtionable proof of his weak judgment. the diſorder of his imagination ſenſibly appears in the heat, the tranſports, and enthuſiaſtic flights he falls into, upon trifling ſubjects-----what could be infer from his pompous deſcriptions of the changes that happen in the world? or how could they juſtify his laying aſide his uſual dreſs, to wear the philoſphical* cloak? *the moon has different* phaſes: *the year has ſeveral ſeaſons: the fields change their appearance in ſummer and winter: whole provinces are drowned by inundations, or ſwallowed up by earthquakes---in fine, all nature is ſubject to changes: therefore he had reaſon to wear the* cloak *rather than the common robe! ---nothing can excuſe the ſilly arguments and wild fancies of this author, who, in ſeveral others of his works, as well as*

ſomething that is ſingular leads them to ſtudy his works: and his uncommon pompous ſtile dazles them. we muſt therefore beware of imitating his thoughts or expreſſions; and only pick out his noble ſentiments, and the knowledge of antiquity.

B. What ſay you of St. Cyprian? is not his ſtile too ſwelling?

A. I think it is: and it could ſcarce be otherwiſe in his age and country. but tho' his language has a tang of the African roughneſs, and the bombaſt that prevailed in his days; yet there is great force and eloquence in it. every where we ſee a great ſoul who expreſſeth his ſentiments in a very noble moving manner. in ſome places of his works we find ‡ affected ornaments: eſpecially in his epiſtle to Donatus; which St.

in that de Pallio, *ſays every thing that comes into his head, if it be a far-fetched conceit, or a bold expreſſion; by which he hoped to ſhew the vigour, (we muſt rather call it, the diſorder) of his imagination.*

Malebranche's recherche de la verité. *Liv.* ii. *p.* 3. *c.* 3.

‡ Locus enim cum die convenit; et mulcendis ſenſibus, ac fovendis, ad lenes auras blandientis autumni hortorum facies amoena conſentit. hic jucundum ſermonibus diem ducere, et ſtudentibus fabulis in divina praecepta conſcientiam pectoris erudire. ac ne colloquium noſtrum arbiter profanus impediat, aut clamor intemperans familiae ſtrepentis obtundat, petamus hanc ſedem. dant receſſum vicina ſecreta, ubi dum erratici palmitum lapſus nexibus pendulis per arundines bajulas repunt, viteam porticum frondea tecta fecerunt: bene hic ſtudia in aures damus; et dum in arbores, et in vites quas videmus,

Auſtin quotes however as a letter full of eloquence. he ſays that God permitted thoſe ſtrokes of vain oratory to fall from St. Cyprian's pen, to ſhew poſterity how much the ſpirit of Chriſtian ſimplicity had, in his following works, retrenched the ſuperfluous ornaments of his ſtile; and reduced it within the bounds of a grave and modeſt eloquence. this (ſays St. Auſtin) is the diſtinguiſhing character of all the letters that St. Cyprian wrote afterwards; which we may ſafely admire and imitate, as being written according to the ſevereſt rules of religion; tho' we cannot hope to come up to them without a great application. in fine, tho' his letter to Donatus (even in St. Auſtin's opinion) be too elaborately adorned; it deſerves however to be called eloquent. for, notwithſtanding its many rhetorical embelliſhments, we cannot but perceive that a great part of the epiſtle is very ſerious, and lively; and moſt proper to give Donatus a noble idea of Chriſtianity. in thoſe paſſages where he is very earneſt, he neglects all turns of wit, and falls into a ſublime and vehement ſtrain.

B. But what do you think of St. Auſtin? is he not the moſt ‡ jingling quibbler that ever wrote? will you defend him?

oblectante proſpectu, oculos amoenamus, animum ſimul et auditus inſtruit, et paſcit obtutus.

Cypr. *ad Donat. epiſt.* II.

‡ Miſi nuncios meos omnes et ſenſus interiores, ut quaererem te, et non inveni, quia male quaerebam. video enim, lux mea, Deus qui illu-

A. No: I cannot vindicate him in that. it was the reigning fault of his time; to which his quick lively fancy naturally inclined him. this ſhews that he was not a perfect orator. but notwithſtanding this defect, he had a great talent for perſuaſion. he reaſoned generally with great force: and he is full of noble notions. he knew the heart of man intirely well, and was ſo polite, that he carefully obſerved the ſtricteſt decency in all his diſcourſes. in ſhort, he expreſſed himſelf almoſt always in a pathetic, gentle, inſinuating manner. now ought not the fault we obſerve in ſo great a man to be forgiven?

minaſti me, quia male te per illos quaerebam quia tu es intus, et tamen ipſi, ubi intraveris, neſciverunt---et tamen cum Deum meum quaero, quaero nihilominus quandam lucem, quam non capit oculus; quandam vocem ſuper omnem vocem, quam non capit aurjs; quendam odorem ſuper omnem odorem, quem non capit naris; quendam dulcorem ſuper omnem dulcorem, quem non capit guſtus; quendam amplexum ſuper omnem amplexum, quem non capit tactus. iſta lux quidem fulget ubi locus non capit: iſta vox ſonat, ubi ſpiritus non rapit: odor iſte redolet, ubi flatus non ſpargit: ſapor iſte ſapit ubi non eſt edacitas; amplexus iſte tangitur, ubi non divellitur. Aug. *Solil.* §. 31.

O dies praeclara et pulchra, neſciens veſperum, non habens occaſum----ubi non erit hoſtis impugnans, neque ulla illecebra, ſed ſumma et certa ſecuritas, ſecura tranquillitas, et tranquilla jocunditas, jocunda felicitas, foelix aeternitas, aeterna beatitudo, et beata Trinitas, et Trinitatis unitas, et unitatis Deitas, et Deitatis beata viſio, quae eſt gaudium Domini Dei tui.----

Aug. *Solil.* §. 35.

C. I muſt own there is one thing in him that I never obſerved in any other writer: I mean, that he has a moving way, even when he quibbles. none of his works are more full of jingling turns, than his confeſſions, and ſoliloquys: and yet we muſt own they are † tender, and apt to affect the reader.

A. It is becauſe he checks the turns of his fancy as much as he can, by the ingenuous ſimplicity of his pious affecting ſentiments. all his works plainly ſhew his love of God. he was not only conſcious of it; but knew well how to expreſs to others the ſtrong ſenſe he had of it. now this tender affecting way, is a part of eloquence. but we ſee beſides that St. Auſtin knew exactly all the eſſential rules of it. he tells us ‡ that a perſuaſive diſcourſe muſt be ſimple and natural: that art muſt not appear in it: and that if it be too fine and elaborate, it puts the hearers upon their guard. to this purpoſe he applies theſe words, which you cannot but

† Quemadmodum deſiderat cervus ad fontes aquarum, ita deſiderat anima mea ad te, Deus. ſitivit anima mea ad te Deum, fontem vivum: quando veniam et apparebo ante faciem tuam? O fons vitae, vena aquarum viventium; quando veniam ad aquas dulcedinis tuae de terra deſerta, invia et inaquoſa; ut videam virtutem tuam, et gloriam tuam, et *ſatiem* ex aquis miſericordiae tuae *ſitim* meam? *ſitio*, Domine, fons vitae es, *ſatia* me. ſitio, Domine, ſitio te Deum vivum: O quando veniam et apparebo, Domine, ante faciem tuam?

Aug. *Solil. cap.* xxxv.

‡ De doct. Chr. l. II.

remember, 'qui ſophiſticè loquitur odibilis eſt.' he talks likewiſe very judiciouſly of the mixing different kinds of ſtile in a diſcourſe; of ranging the ſeveral parts of it in ſuch a manner as to make it increaſe gradually in ſtrength and evidence: of the neceſſity of being plain and familiar, even as to the tones of the voice, and our action in particular paſſages; tho' every thing we ſay ſhould ſtill have a dignity when we preach religion. in fine, he likewiſe ſhews the way to awaken and move people. theſe are St. Auſtin's notions of eloquence. but if you would ſee with how much art he actually influenced people's minds, and with what addreſs he moved their paſſions, according to the true deſign of eloquence; you muſt read the account he gives of a diſcourſe he made to the people of Caeſarea, in Mauritania, in order to aboliſh a barbarous practice. it ſeems there prevailed among them an antient cuſtom, which they had carried to a monſtrous pitch of cruelty. his buſineſs therefore was to draw off the people from a ſpectacle that delighted them extremely. judge now what a difficult enterprize this was. however, he tells us that after he had talked to them for ſome time, they ſpake aloud and applauded him. but he concluded that his diſcourſe had not perſuaded them, ſeeing they amuſed themſelves in commending him. he thought he had done nothing while he only raiſed delight and admiration in his hearers: nor did he begin to hope for any good effect from his diſcourſe, till he ſaw them

weep. 'in effect (ſays he) the people were at length 'prevailed on to give up this delightful ſpectacle: nor 'has it been renewed theſe eight years.' is not St. Auſtin then a true orator? have we any preachers that are able to talk ſo powerfully now? as for St. Jerom, he has ſome faults in his ſtile: but his expreſſions are manly, and great. he is not regular; but he is far more eloquent than moſt of thoſe who value themſelves upon their oratory. we ſhould judge like mere grammarians if we examined only the ſtile and language of the fathers. you know there is a great difference between eloquence, and what we call elegance, or purity, of ſtile------St. Ambroſe likewiſe fell into the faſhionable defects of his time; and gives his diſcourſe ſuch ornaments as were then in vogue. perhaps theſe great men (who had higher views than the common rules of rhetoric,) conformed themſelves to the prevailing taſte of the age they lived in, that they might the better inſinuate the truths of religion upon people's minds, by engaging them to hear the word of God with pleaſure. but notwithſtanding the puns and quibbles that St. Ambroſe ſometimes uſes, we ſee that he wrote to Theodoſius with an inimitable force and perſuaſion. how much tenderneſs does he expreſs when he ſpeaks of the death of his brother Satyrus? in the Roman breviary we have a diſcourſe of his, concerning John the Baptiſt's head, which, he ſays, Herod reſpected and dreaded, even after his death. if you obſerve that diſcourſe,

you will find the end of it very ſublime. St. Leo's ſtile is ſwelling, but truly noble. Pope Gregory lived ſtill in a worſe age: and yet he wrote ſeveral things with much ſtrength and dignity. we ought to diſtinguiſh thoſe failings into which the degeneracy of arts and learning led theſe great men, in common with other writers of their ſeveral ages: and at the ſame time obſerve what their genius and ſentiments furniſhed them with, to perſuade their hearers.

C. But do you think then that the taſte of eloquence was quite loſt in thoſe ages that were ſo happy for religion?

A. Yes: within a little time after the reign of Auguſtus, eloquence, and the Latin tongue began to decline apace. the fathers did not live till after this corruption: ſo that we muſt not look on them as compleat models. we muſt even acknowledge that moſt of the ſermons they have left us are compoſed with leſs skill and force, than their other works. when I ſhewed you from the teſtimony of the fathers that the ſcripture is eloquent; (which you ſeemed to believe upon their credit;) I knew very well that the oratory of theſe witneſſes, is much inferior to that of the ſacred writings themſelves. but there are ſome perſons of ſuch a depraved taſte, that they cannot reliſh the beauties of Iſaiah; and yet they will admire Chryſologus; in whom (notwithſtanding his fine name,) there is little to be found beſides abundance of evangelical piety couched under

numberleſs quibbles, and low witticiſms. in the eaſt, the juſt way of ſpeaking and writing, was better preſerved: and the Greek tongue continued for ſome time, almoſt in its antient purity. St. Chryſoſtom ſpake it very well. his ſtile, you know, is copious; but he did not ſtudy falſe ornaments. all his diſcourſe tends to perſuaſion: he placed every thing with judgment; and was well acquainted with the ‡ holy ſcripture, and the

‡ ΒΑΣ. Τί οὖν ὁ Παῦλος, φησὶν; οὐκ ἐσπούδασε ταύτην κατορθωθῆναι τὴν ἀρετὴν, οὐδὲ ἐγκαλύπτεται ἐπὶ τῇ τοῦ λόγου πενίᾳ, ἀλλὰ καὶ διαῤῥήδην ὁμολογεῖ ἰδιώτην ἑαυτὸν εἶναι------- ΧΡΥΣ. Τοῦτο γὰρ, ἔφην, τουτό ἐστιν ὃ τοὺς πολλοὺς ἀπώλεσε; καὶ ῥαθυμοτέρους περὶ τὴν ἀληθῆ διδασκαλίαν ἐποίησε. μὴ γὰρ δυνηθέντες ἀκριβῶς ἐξετάσαι τῶν Αποστολικῶν φρενῶν τὸ βάθος, μηδὲ συνιέναι τὴν τῶν ῥημάτων διάνοιαν, διετέλεσαν τὸν ἅπαντα χρόνον νυστάζοντες καὶ χασμώμενοι------οἱ δὲ νῦν ὄντες (ἀλλ' οὐδὲν δύναμαι δυχερὲς εἰπεῖν, οὐδὲ βαρύ· καὶ γὰρ καὶ ταῦτα οὐκ ἐπεμβαίνων αὐτοῖς λέγω νῦν, ἀλλὰ θαυμάζων) πῶς οὐ φρίττουσιν ἀνδρὶ τηλικούτῳ παραβάλλοντες ἑαυτούς; εἰ γὰρ καὶ τὰ θαύματα ἀφέντες, ἐπὶ τὸν βίον ἔλθοιμεν τοῦ μακαρίου, καὶ τὴν πολιτείαν ἐξετάσαιμεν αὐτοῦ τὴν ἀγγελικὴν, καὶ ἐν ταύτῃ μᾶλλον, ἢ ἐν τοῖς σημείοις, ὄψει νικῶντα τὸν ἀθλητὴν τοῦ Χρίστου----ἐγὼ δὲ, εἰ μὲν τῆς λειότητα Ισοκράτους ἀπήτουν, καὶ τὸν Δημοσθένους ὄγκον, καὶ τὴν Θουκυδίδου σεμνότητα, καὶ τὸ

manners of men. he entered into their hearts; and rendered things familiarly ſenſible to them. he had ſublime and ſolid notions; and is ſometimes very affecting. upon the whole, we muſt own he is a great orator. St. Gregory Nazianzen is more † conciſe, and more poetical; but not quite ſo perſuaſive. and yet he has ſeveral moving paſſages; particularly, in his funeral oration upon his brother St. Baſil; and in his laſt diſcourſe at

Πλάτωνος ὕψος. ἔδει φέρειν εἰς μέσον ταύτην τοῦ Παύλου τὴν μαρτυρίαν---- ἀλλ' ἐξέσω ϗ τῇ λέξει πλωχεύειν, καὶ τὴν συνθήκην ϗ ὀνομάτων ἁπλῆν τινὰ εἶναι ϗ ἀφελῆ· μόνον μὴ τῇ γνώσει τὶς ϗ τῇ τῶν δογμάτων ἀκριβείᾳ ἰδιώτης ἔσω· μηδ' ἵνα τὴν οἰκείαν ἀργίαν ἐπικαλύψῃ, τὸν μακάριον ἐκεῖνον ἀφαιρείσθω τὸ μέγιστον τῶν ἀγαθῶν, καὶ τὸ τῶν ἐγκωμίων κεφάλαιον.

CHRYS. de Sacerdotio. L. iv. §. 6.

† Οὐ μὴν οὐδ' (ὅσπερ ἄν ὑπολάβοι τὶς ἴσως τῶν πάντων ἀτόπων, ϗ μοχθηρῶν, οἱ κρίνουσι, τὰ τῶν ἄλλων τοῖς οἰκείοις πάθεσιν) ἠχύνθην τῷ βαθμῷ τὴν τάξιν ἐπιθυμίᾳ τῆς μείζονος. ϗχ ὕτως ἐγὼ, ἢ τῷ θείῳ μεγέθος, ἢ τῆς ἀνθρωπίνης ταπεινώσεως ἄπειρος, ὡς μὴ μέγα νομίζειν πάσῃ γηγνητῇ φύσει ϗ ὁπωσοῦν πλησιάζειν Θεῷ, τῷ μόνῳ φανοτάτῳ καὶ λαμπροτάτῳ καὶ ὑπερέχοντι πάσης ὑλικῆς, καὶ ἄϋλου φύσεως καθαρότητι -----καθαρθῆναι δεῖ πρῶτον; εἶτα καθᾶραι· σοφισθῆναι ϗ ὕτω σοφίσαι· γενέσθαι φῶς, καὶ φωτίσαι·

taking leave of Conſtantinople. St. Baſil is grave, ſententious, and rigid, even in his ſtile. he had meditated profoundly on all the truths of the goſpel: he knew exactly all the diſorders and weakneſſes of human nature; and he had a great ſagacity in the conduct of ſouls. there is nothing more eloquent than his epiſtle to a virgin that had fallen: in my opinion it is a maſterpiece. but now if a preacher ſhould not have formed his taſte in theſe matters before he ſtudies the fathers, he will be in danger of copying the moſt unaccurate parts of their works; and may perhaps imitate their chief defects in the ſermons he compoſes.

C. But how long continued this falſe eloquence which ſucceeded the true kind?

A. Till now.

C. What do you mean? till now?

A. Yes, 'till now: for we have not yet corrected our taſte of eloquence, ſo much as we imagine. you will ſoon perceive the reaſon of it. the barbarous nations that over-ran the Roman empire, did ſpread ignorance and a bad taſte every where. now we deſcended from them. and tho' learning began to revive in the fifteenth century; it recovered then but ſlowly. it was

ἐγλίσαι θεῷ, καὶ προσαγαγεῖν ἄλλως· ἁγιασθῆναι χ̀ ἁγιάσαι· χειραγωγῆσαι μετὰ χειρῶν, συμβυλῆσαι μετὰ συνέσεως.

GREG. NAZ. Orat. Apol.

with great difficulty that we were brought by degrees to have any reliſh of a right manner: and even now, how many are there who have no notion of it? however we ought to ſhew a due reſpect not only to the Fathers, but to other pious authors, who wrote during this long interval of ignorance. from them we learn the traditions of their time, and ſeveral other uſeful inſtructions. I am quite aſhamed of giving my judgment ſo freely on this point: but, gentlemen, ye deſired me. and I ſhall be very ready to own my miſtakes if any one will undeceive me. but it is time to put an end to this converſation.

C. We cannot part with you till you give us your opinion about the manner of chuſing a text.

A. You know very well that the uſe of texts aroſe from the antient cuſtom that preachers obſerved, in not delivering their own reflections to the people; but only explaining the words of the ſacred text. however by degrees they came to leave-off this way of expounding the whole words of the goſpel that was appointed for the day; and diſcourſed only upon one part of it, which they called the text of the ſermon. now if a preacher does not make an exact explication of the whole goſpel, or epiſtle, he ought at leaſt to chuſe thoſe words that are moſt important; and beſt ſuited to the wants and capacities of the people. he ought to explain them well: and to give a right notion of what is meant by a ſingle word, it is oft-times neceſſary to expound

many others in the context. but there ſhould be nothing refined or far-fetched in ſuch inſtructions. it muſt look very ſtrange and aukward in a preacher to ſet up for wit and delicacy of invention, when he ought to ſpeak with the utmoſt ſerioufneſs and gravity; out of regard to the authority of the Holy Spirit whoſe words he borrows.

C. I muſt confeſs I always diſliked a forced text. have you not obſerved that a preacher draws from a text, whatever ſermons he pleaſes? he inſenſibly warps and bends his ſubject to make the text fit the ſermon that he has occaſion to preach. this is frequently done in the time of Lent. I cannot approve of it.

B. Before we conclude, I muſt beg of you to ſatisfy me as to one point that ſtill puzzles me, and after that we will let you go.

A. Come then; let us hear what it is. I have a great mind to ſatisfy you if I can. for I heartily wiſh you would employ your parts in making plain and perſuaſive ſermons.

B. You would have a preacher explain the holy ſcriptures with connection, according to the obvious ſenſe of them.

A. Yes: that would be an excellent method.

B. Whence then did it proceed that the fathers interpreted the ſcripture quite otherwiſe? they uſually give a ſpiritual, and allegorical meaning to the ſacred text. read St. Auſtin, St. Ambroſe, St. Jerom, Origen

and others of the fathers: they find myſteries every where, and ſeldom regard the letter of ſcripture.

A. The Jews that lived in our Saviour's days abounded in theſe myſterious allegorical interpretations. it ſeems that the Therapeutae who lived chiefly at Alexandria, (and whom Philo reckoned to be philoſophical Jews, tho' Euſebius ſuppoſes they were primitive Chriſtians,) were extremely addicted to theſe myſtical interpretations. and indeed it was in the city of Alexandria that allegories began to appear with credit among Chriſtians. Origen was the firſt of the fathers who forſook the literal ſenſe of ſcripture. you know what diſturbance he occaſioned in the church. piety itſelf ſeemed to recommend theſe allegorical interpretations. and beſides there is ſomething in them very agreeable, ingenious, and edifying. moſt of the fathers to gratify the humour of the people (and probably their own too) made great uſe of them. but they kept faithfully to the literal, and the prophetical ſenſe (which in its kind is literal too) in all points where they had occaſion to ſhew the foundations of the Chriſtian doctrine. when the people were fully inſtructed in every thing they could learn from the letter of ſcripture; the fathers gave them thoſe myſtical interpretations to edify and comfort them. theſe explications were exactly adapted to the reliſh of the eaſtern people, among whom they firſt aroſe: for, they are naturally fond of myſterious and allegorical language. they were the more delighted with

this variety of interpretations, becauſe of the frequent preaching, and almoſt conſtant reading of ſcripture, which was uſed in the church. but among us the people are far leſs inſtructed: we muſt do what is moſt neceſſary; and begin with the literal ſenſe; without deſpiſing the pious explications that the fathers gave. we muſt take care of providing our daily bread; before we ſeek after delicacies. in interpreting ſcripture we cannot do better than to imitate the ſolidity of St. Chryſoſtom. moſt of our modern preachers do not ſtudy allegorical meanings, becauſe they have ſufficiently explained the literal ſenſe; but they forſake it, becauſe they do not percive its grandeur; and reckon it dry and barren in compariſon of their way of preaching. but we have all the truths and duties of religion in the letter of the ſcripture, delivered not only with authority, and a ſingular beauty, but with an inexhauſtible variety: ſo that without having recourſe to myſtical interpretations, a preacher may always have a great number of new and noble things to ſay. it is a deplorable thing to ſee how much this ſacred treaſure is neglected even by thoſe who have it always in their hands. if the clergy applyed themſelves to the antient way of making homilies, we ſhould then have two different ſorts of preachers. they who have no vivacity, or a poetical genius, would explain the ſcriptures clearly, without imitating its lively noble manner: and if they expounded the word of God judiciouſly, and ſupport-

ed their doctrine by an exemplary life, they would be very good preachers, they would have what St. Ambroſe requires, a chaſte, ſimple, clear ſtile, full of weight and gravity; without affecting elegance, or deſpiſing the ſmoothneſs and graces of language. the other ſort having a poetical turn of mind would explain the ſcripture in its own ſtile and figures; and by that means become accompliſhed preachers. one ſort would inſtruct people with clearneſs, force, and dignity: and the other would add to this powerful inſtruction, the ſublimity, the ‡ enthuſiaſm, and vehemence of ſcripture: ſo that

‡ *Inſpiration may be juſtly called* divine enthuſiaſm---*for inſpiration is a* real *feeling of the* divine preſence; *and enthuſiaſm a falſe one.*

Characteriſtcs, vol. i. p. 53.

This is what our author advances, when in behalf of enthuſiaſm *he quotes its formal enemies, and ſhews that they are as capable of it as its greateſt confeſſors and martyrs. ſo far is he from degrading* enthuſiaſm, *or diſclaiming it in himſelf, that he looks on this* paſſion *ſimply conſidered, as the moſt natural; and its* object, *the* juſteſt *in the world. even* virtue *itſelf he takes to be no other than a noble* enthuſiaſm *juſtly directed and regulated by that high ſtandard which he ſuppoſes in the nature of things---nor is thorow* honeſty, *in his hypotheſis, any other than this zeal, or paſſion, moving ſtrongly upon the* ſpecies, *or view of the* decorum, *and* ſublime *of actions. others may purſue different forms, and fix their eye on different ſpecies, (as all men do on one or other :) the real* honeſt man, *however plain or ſimple he appears, has that higheſt ſpecies,* [*the* honeſtum, pulchrum, τὸ καλὸν, πρέπον] honeſty *itſelf in view;*

it would (if I may ſo ſay) be intire, and living in them, as much as it can be in men who are not miraculouſly inſpired from above.

B. Oh, Sir: I had almoſt forgot an important article. have a moment's patience, I beſeech you: a few words will ſatisfy me.

A. What now? have you any body elſe to cenſure?

B. Yes: the panegyriſts. do you think that when they praiſe a ſaint, they ought ſo to give his character, as to reduce all his actions, and all his virtues to one point?

A. That ſhews the orator's invention and refined ſenſe.

B. I underſtand you. it ſeems you do not like that method.

A. I think it wrong in moſt caſes. he muſt put a force upon things, who reduces them all to a ſingle point. there are many actions of one's life that flow from diverſe principles, and plainly ſhew that he poſſeſſed very different qualities. the way of referring all the ſteps of a man's conduct to one cauſe, is but a ſcholaſtic ſub-

and inſtead of outward *forms or ſymmetrys, is ſtruck with that of inward character, the* harmony *and numbers of the* heart, *and* beauty *of the* affections, *which form the manners, and conduct of a truly ſocial life* ——*upon the whole therefore, according to our author,* enthuſiaſm *is in itſelf, a very natural,* honeſt *paſſion, and has properly nothing for its object but what is* good *and* honeſt. Char. vol. iii. Miſcel. 2. ch. 1.

tility, which ſhews that the orator is far from knowing human nature. the true way to draw a juſt character, is to paint the whole man, and to ſet him before the hearer's eyes, ſpeaking and acting, in deſcribing the courſe of his life, the preacher ſhould chiefly point out thoſe paſſages wherein either his natural temper, or his piety beſt appeared. but there ſhould always be ſomething left to the hearer's own obſervation. the beſt way of praiſing holy perſons is to recount their laudable actions. this gives a body and force to a panegyric: this is what inſtructs people; and makes an impreſſion upon their minds. but it frequently happens that they return home without knowing any thing of a perſon's life, about whom they have heard an hour's diſcourſe: or at leaſt they have heard many remarks upon a few ſeparate facts, related without any connection. on the contrary a preacher ought to paint a perſon to the life; and ſhew what he was in every period, in every condition, and in the moſt remarkable junctures, of his life. this could not hinder one from forming a character of him: nay it might be better collected from his actions, and his words than from general thoughts, and imaginary deſigns.

B. You would chuſe then to give the hiſtory of a holy perſon's life, and not make a panegyric.

A. No: you miſtake me. I would not make a ſimple narration. I ſhould think it enough to give a coherent view of the chief facts in a conciſe, lively, cloſe, pa-

thetic manner. every thing ſhould help to give a juſt idea of the holy perſon I praiſed; and at the ſame time to give proper inſtruction to the hearers. to this I would add ſuch moral reflections, as I ſhould think moſt ſutable. now do not you think that ſuch a diſcourſe as this would have a noble and amiable ſimplicity? do not you believe that the lives of holy people would be better underſtood this way, and an audience be more edifyed, than they generally are? do you not think that according to the rules of eloquence we laid down, ſuch a diſcourſe would even be more eloquent than thoſe over-ſtrained panegyrics that are commonly made?

B. I am of opinion that ſuch ſermons as you ſpeak of would be as inſtructive, as affecting, and as agreeable as any other. I am now ſatisfied, Sir: it is time to releaſe you. I hope the pains you have taken with me will not be loſt: for I have reſolved to part with all my modern collections, and Italian wits; and in a ſerious manner to ſtudy the whole connection and principles of religion; by tracing them back to their ſource.

C. Farewel, Sir: the beſt acknowledgment I can make, is to aſſure you that I will have a great regard to what you have ſaid.

A. Gentlemen, good night. I will leave you with theſe words of St. Jerom to Nepotian: 'when you 'teach in the church, do not endeavour to draw ap-

'plauſe, but rather ſighs and groans from the people: 'let their tears praiſe you. the diſcourſes of a clergy-'man ſhould be full of the holy ſcripture. be not a 'declaimer, but a true teacher of the myſteries of 'God.

FINIS.

A

LETTER

FROM THE

ARCHBISHOP

OF

CAMBRAY

TO THE

FRENCH ACADEMY;

CONCERNING

RHETORIC, POETRY, HISTORY:

AND

A COMPARISON BETWEEN THE ANTIENTS AND MODERNS.

GLASGOW:
PRINTED AND SOLD BY R. AND A. FOULIS.
M.DCC.LX.

A

LETTER

TO

Mr. FONTENELLE,

Secretary to the French ACADEMY.

SIR,

I AM aſhamed of having deferred ſo long to anſwer your letter: but my ill ſtate of health, and a continual hurry of affairs occaſioned this delay. the choice that the † Academy has made of you for their perpetual ſecretary, is worthy of ſuch a ſociety; and pro-

† *Of late in many parts of* Europe, *ſome gentlemen met together; ſubmitted to common laws, and formed themſelves into academies. but it has been for the moſt part to a different purpoſe [from the royal ſocieties:] and moſt of them only aimed at the ſmoothing of their ſtile and the language of their country. of theſe, the firſt aroſe in Italy——but that which excelled all the other, and kept itſelf longer untainted from the corruptions of ſpeech was the French Academy at Paris. this was compoſed of the nobleſt authors of that nation; and had for its founder the great Cardinal de Richelieu: who amongſt all his cares, whereby he eſtabliſhed and enlarged that monarchy ſo much, did often refreſh himſelf by directing, and taking an account of their progreſs. and indeed in his own life, he found ſo great ſucceſs of this inſtitution, that he ſaw the French tongue abundantly purifyed, and beginning to take*

miſes great advantage to the commonwealth of learning. I own, Sir, that I am ſomewhat perplexed with the requeſt you make me in the name of a body to which I am ſo much obliged, but ſeeing they deſire it, I will freely give them my opinion, with a great diſtruſt of myſelf, and a ſincere deference for thoſe who vouchſafe to conſult me.

§. 1. The dictionary that the academy is forming well deſerves to be finiſhed. cuſtom indeed which often changes living languages may at length alter what this dictionary ſhall determine:

place in the weſtern world, almoſt as much as the Greek did of old, when it was the language of merchants, ſoldiers, courtiers, and travellers. but I ſhall ſay no more of this academy, that I may not deprive my reader of the delight of peruſing their own hiſtory written by M. de Peliſſon; which is ſo maſculinely, ſo chaſtly, and ſo unaffectedly done, that I can hardly forbear envying the French nation this honour; that while the Engliſh Royal Society has ſo much outgone their illuſtrious academy in the greatneſs of its undertaking, it ſhould be ſo far ſhort of them in the abilities of its hiſtorian. I have only this to alledge in my excuſe, that as they undertook the advancement of the elegance of ſpeech, ſo it became their hiſtory to have ſome reſemblance to their enterprize: whereas the intention of our's being not the artifice of words, but a bare knowledge of things; my fault may be eſteemed the leſs, that I have written of philoſophers without any ornament of eloquence.

Bp. Sprat's Hiſt. of the royal ſociety, *p.* 39, 40.

Nedum ſermonum ſtet honos, et gratia vivax.
Multa renaſcentur quae jam cecidere; cadentque
Quae nunc ſunt in honore vocabula, ſi volet uſus;
Quem penes arbitrium eſt, et jus, et norma loquendi.
HOR. de Ar. Poet. v. 69.----

however it will be of ſeveral uſes. it will be ſerviceable to foreigners who are fond of the French language, and improve themſelves by reading the many excellent books of ſeveral kinds that are publiſhed in it. beſides, the moſt polite among the French themſelves may ſometimes have occaſion to conſult the dictionary, about ſuch words as they doubt of. in fine, when our language becomes much altered, the dictionary will help to explain thoſe books that are written in the preſent age, and which will be admired by poſterity. are we not obliged now to explain the language of Villehardouin, and Joinville? we would be extremely glad to have Greek, and Latin dictionaries made by the antients themſelves. it muſt indeed be owned that the perfecting of dictionaries is a point in which the moderns have out-done the antients. in time, poſterity will find the benefit of having a dictionary, that will ſerve as a key to ſo many fine books. the value of ſuch a work muſt increaſe in proportion to its age.

§. II. It were to be wiſhed, methinks, that the Academy would add a grammar to their dictionary. it

would be a great help to foreigners, who are often perplexed with our irregular phraſes. the habitual eaſineſs of ſpeaking our own language, hinders us from perceiving what it is that puzzles them. beſides, moſt of the French themſelves would ſometimes have occaſion to conſult ſuch an eſtabliſhed rule. they learned their mother tongue only by cuſtom: and cuſtom has its defects, every where: each province has its own: Paris is not faultleſs. even the court itſelf has a tang of the language of Paris; where the children of the higheſt quality are uſually educated. the moſt polite people can ſcarce get rid of the tone, and peculiar expreſſions they learned in their childhood, by converſing with their attendants, in Gaſcony, Normandy, or in Paris itſelf.

The Greeks and Romans did not think it enough that they learned their native-tongue by mere practice. when they grew up, they ſtudied it in the works of grammarians, to obſerve the rules, the exceptions, the etymologies, the figurative ſenſes, the ſtructure of the whole language, and its variations.

A learned grammarian would be in danger of making a grammar too elaborate, and too full of precepts. I think it would be beſt to keep to a ſhort and eaſy method. at firſt, give only the moſt common rules: the exceptions will be learned by degrees. the chief point is to ſet a learner, as ſoon as poſſible, to apply the general rules, by frequent practice: and afterward he will take a pleaſure in obſerving the parti-

cular rules that he followed at firſt, without heeding them.

This grammar could not fix a living language: but it would probably leſſen the capricious changes, by which the mode governs our words as well as our cloaths. theſe fanciful alterations may at length perplex and ſpoil a language, inſtead of improving it.

§. III. May I not preſume here, from an exceſs of zeal, to offer a propoſal, which I readily ſubmit to ſuch a judicious ſociety? our language wants a great many words and phraſes. nay I cannot but think that within theſe hundred years, it has been cramped and impoveriſhed by refining it. it was then ſomewhat unpoliſhed indeed, and too verboſe: but we regret the loſs of the old language, when we find it in the works of Marot, Amiot, the Cardinal d'Oſſat; in the moſt humorous writings, as well as in the moſt ſerious. it had ſomething in it very ſhort, ſimple, bold, lively, and affecting. if I miſtake not, we have thrown out more words than we have taken in. now I would have none loſt; but new ones introduced. I would have every word authorized, that we want, if it ſound ſweetly, and be not ambiguous.

When we carefully examine the ſignification of words, we perceive there are ſcarce any two that have exactly the ſame meaning. we find very many that do not point out an object diſtinctly enough, unleſs we add

a ſecond word. hence comes the frequent uſe of circumlocutions; which oblige us to 'uſe ſeveral words 'to expreſs one idea.' it would be proper to abridge our language, by fixing one plain proper word to expreſs every object, every ſentiment; and every action. I would even have ſeveral ſynonymous terms for one thing. this is the way to avoid all ambiguity; to vary our expreſſions; and to make them all harmonious: ſeeing we might eaſily chuſe out of ſeveral ſynonymous words, that which runs ſmootheſt with the reſt of the period.

The Greeks had a great number of theſe compounded words; ſuch as Pantocrator, Glaucopis, Eucnemides, &c. and tho' the Latins were more reſerved in this point, they imitated the Greeks a little; as in Lanifica, Maleſuada, Pomifer, &c. this way of compounding words made their language conciſe, and their verſes more magnificent. beſides, the Greeks freely uſed ſeveral dialects in the ſame poem; to make their verſification more various and eaſy. the Latins enriched their tongue with ſuch foreign words as they needed. for inſtance, they wanted ſome terms that were proper for philoſophy, which began at Rome very late. ſo when they learned Greek they borrowed its terms to argue upon the ſciences. Tully who was nicely ſcrupulous about the purity of his language, very freely uſed ſuch Greek terms as he needed. a Greek word, when firſt uſed, was reckoned uncouth: however ſome

begged leave to use it: and then the permission they obtained, soon turned into custom, and made it current Latin.

I am informed that the † English refuse no words

† *I hope it will not be thought a vain digression, if I step a little aside to recommend to the gentlemen of our nation, the forming of such an assembly,* [*as the French Academy.*] *I know indeed that the English genius is not so airy and discoursive, as that of some of our neighbours; but that we generally love to have reason set out in plain undeceiving expressions; as much as they to have it delivered with colour and beauty. and besides this, I understand well enough that they have one great assistance to the growth of oratory, which to us is wanting; that is, that their nobility live commonly close together in their cities; and ours for the most part scattered in their country-houses----whereas it is from the frequent conversations in cities, that the humour, and wit, and variety and elegance of language, are chiefly to be fetched. but yet notwithstanding these discouragements I shall not stick to say that such a project is now seasonable to be set on foot; and may make a great reformation in the manner of our speaking and writing. first, the thing itself is no way contemptible. for, the purity of speech, and greatness of empire, have in all countries still met together. the Greeks spoke best when they were in their glory of conquest. the Romans made those times the standard of their wit, when they subdued, and gave laws to the world: and from thence by degrees they declined to corruption; as their valour, their prudence, and the honour of their arms did decay: and at last did even meet the northern nations half way in barbarism, a little before they were over-run by their armies.*

But besides, if we observe well the English language, we shall find, that it seems at this

that fit their purpoſe; but borrow freely from any of their neighbours, ſuch a practice is very allowable. in this caſe, mere uſe makes a language common to all men. words are but ſounds that we arbitrarily uſe to expreſs our thoughts: and theſe ſounds are in them-

time more than others, to require ſome ſuch aid, to bring it to its laſt perfection. the truth is, it has been hitherto a little too careleſly handled; and, I think, has had leſs labour ſpent about its poliſhing, than it deſerves. till the time of King Henry the Eight, there was ſcarce any man regarded it but Chaucer; and nothing was written in it which one would be willing to read twice, but ſome of his poetry. but then it began to raiſe itſelf a little, and to ſound tolerably well. from that age down to the beginning of our late civil wars, it was ſtill faſhioning and beautifying itſelf. in the wars themſelves----it received many fantaſtical terms, which were introduced by our religious ſects; and many outlandiſh phraſes, which ſeveral writers and tranſlators, in that great hurry brought in and made free as they pleaſed; and withal it was enlarged by many ſound and neceſſary forms, and idioms which it before wanted. and now when men's minds are ſomewhat ſettled, their paſſions allayed, and the peace of our country gives us the opportunity of ſuch diverſions; if ſome ſober and judicious men would take the whole maſs of our language into their hands, as they find it, and would ſet a mark on the ill words; correct thoſe which are to be retained; admit and eſtabliſh the good; and make ſome emendations in the accent, and grammar: I dare pronounce that our ſpeech would quickly arrive at as much plenty, as it is capable to receive; and at the greateſt ſmoothneſs, which its derivation from the rough German will allow it.

Hiſtory of the royal ſociety *p.* 41, 42.

ſelves of no value. all people have the ſame right to uſe them. what matter is it then, whether a word belongs originally to our language, or comes from a foreign country? it would be very childiſh to take any exception at ſuch a trifle as the manner of moving our lips, and ſhaking the air.

Beſides, we have no pretence for inſiſting upon this falſe point of honour. our language is only a mixture of the Greek, Latin, and Teutonic, with ſome confuſed remains of the Gauliſh. now ſeeing the main ſtock of it is borrowed from other tongues; why ſhould we, through a groundleſs ſhame, deny ourſelves the liberty of borrowing what words we ſtill want to enrich our language? we ought to take from all quarters, whatever we need to render it more clear, more exact, more harmonious, and more conciſe: for all circumlocution weakens a diſcourſe.

It is true the choice of ſuch words as ought to be authorized, ſhould be left to perſons of a juſt taſte and approved diſcernment. Latin words ſeem to be fitteſt for this purpoſe: for, they ſound agreeably; and depend on other words, that are already French. people's ears are accuſtomed to them: there is but one ſtep wanting to make them current; and that is, their having an agreeable termination given them. when the introducing of new words is left to chance, or to ignorant people, or the fancies of women; they admit ſeveral terms that are neither ſo clear, nor ſo ſmooth as

were to be wiſhed. I own that without a prudent deliberate choice, we ſhould haſtily adopt a great number of foreign words, we ſhould make our language a confuſed unpoliſhed medley of other tongues of a quite different kind: as ill-digeſted food adds to the maſs of blood, an unſutable mixture of parts that rather corrupt, than recruit it. but we muſt remember, that we have but juſt thrown off that uncivilized manner which was as antient as our nation.

——Sed in longum tamen aevum
Manſerunt, hodieque manent veſtigia ruris.
Serus enim Graecis admovit acumina chartis.
HOR. Ep. L. II.

Some will perhaps object that the Academy has not power to make a new term current; and that the public may oppoſe it. I remember the inſtance of Tiberius, that formidable maſter of the Romans lives; who made himſelf ridiculous by affecting to introduce the word Monopolium. however I believe that the public would readily ſhew a deference to ſuch a diſcreet authority as the Academy would uſe. why might not we affect what the Engliſh do every day: when ye find the want of a word, chuſe one that ſounds ſweetly, and is not in the leaſt ambiguous; one that is agreeable to our language, and will help to abridge diſcourſe: every one will perceive the convenience of ſuch a word. let four or five

erſons uſe it modeſtly in familiar converſation; others ill repeat it, through a love of novelty: and then it ecomes faſhionable. thus a path that one opens in a eld, ſoon becomes a beaten way, when the old path rugged and fartheſt about.

Beſides new and ſimple words, we want ſome com-ounded ones, and phraſes: in which the art of join-g words together, that were always uſed apart, might oduce a graceful novelty.

Dixeris egregie, notum ſi callida verbum
Reddiderit junctura novum——————

Hor. de Ar. Poet. v. 47—

hus the Latins ſaid Velivolum in one word compoſed two: and of two diſtinct words they made phraſes; ch as 'remigium alarum, lubricus aſpici.' but in this int we muſt be ſparing and cautious:

——————tenuis cautuſque ſerendis.

Ibid.

: nations that live in a mild climate reliſh ſtrong and d metaphors leſs than the people of hot countries . our language would ſoon become copious, if thoſe o are in greateſt repute for politeneſs endeavoured introduce ſuch expreſſions, (either ſimple, or figura-e) as we have hitherto wanted.

§. IV. An excellent † rhetoric would be far more valuable than a grammar, or any other project that tends only to bring a language to greater perfection. he who would undertake this work, ſhould collect into it all the fineſt precepts of Ariſtotle, Cicero, Quintilian, Lucian, Longinus, and other famous authors. the paſſages he might quote from them, would be the ornaments of his work. by taking only the choiceſt parts of the pureſt antiquity, he would make a ſhort, curious, delicate treatiſe.

I am very far from preferring the genius of the antient orators, to that of the moderns, in all reſpects. I think the compariſon that has been lately made on this ſubject is very juſt. for, as trees have now the ſame form, and bear the ſame kind of fruit, that the

† *Nor would I have this new Engliſh Academy confined only to the weighing words, and letters: there may be alſo greater works found out for it. by many ſigns we may gueſs that the wits of our nation are not inferior to any other; and that they have an excellent mixture of the ſpirit of the French, and the Spaniard: and I am confident that we only want a few more ſtanding examples, and a little more familiarity with the antients to excell all the moderns. now the beſt means that can be deviſed to bring that about, is to ſettle a fixt and impartial court of eloquence; according to whoſe cenſure all books, or authors, ſhould either ſtand, or fall---the Royal Society is ſo far from being like to put a ſtop to ſuch a buſineſs that I know many of its members who are as able as any others to aſſiſt in the bringing into practice.*

Hiſtory of the Royal Society, *p.* 42, 43.

had a thouſand years ago; ſo men continue to produce the ſame thoughts. but there are two things I muſt here take the freedom to ſuggeſt. the firſt is, that ſome climates are more happy than others, for ſome particular talents, as well as for certain kinds of fruit. for inſtance, Languedoc and Provence produce raiſins and figs of a better taſte, than Normandy, or the Netherlands. ſo the Arcadians had a genius fitter for polite arts than the Scythians. the Sicilians have a better taſte of muſic than the Laplanders. we find likewiſe that the † Athenians had a more quick and ſprightly wit than the Beotians. the ſecond thing I obſerve, is, that the Greeks had a kind of long tradition that we want. eloquence was more cultivated among them, than it can be in our nation. among the Greeks all things depended on the people: and the people were influenced by haranguing. in their form of government, fortune, reputation, and authority, were obtained by perſuading the people. artful vehement declaimers ſwayed them as they pleaſed: and oratory was the great ſpring of affairs both in peace, and war. hence come thoſe numerous harangues mentioned in hiſtory, which we reckon incredible; becauſe they are ſo intirely different from our manners. Diodorus the Sicilian tells us that Nicolaus and Gyſippus by turns influenced the Syracuſi-

† Athenis tenue coelum, ex quo acutiores etiam putantur Attici; craſſum Thebis. Boeotum *in craſſo jurares aëre natum.* Cic. *de Fato* §. 4. HOR.

ans. the one prevailed with them at firſt to pardon ſome Athenian priſoners: and the next moment, the other perſuaded them to put thoſe very priſoners to death.

Rhetoric has no ſuch influence now among us. public aſſemblies meet only for ſhows, and ceremonies. we have ſcarce any remains of a powerful eloquence, either of our old parliaments, or our general ſtates, or our aſſemblies of † chief perſons. every thing is determined ſecretly in cabinet-councils, or in ſome particular negotiation. ſo that our people have no encouragement to uſe ſuch application as the Greeks did, to raiſe themſelves by the art of perſuaſion. the public uſe of eloquence is now almoſt confined to the pulpit, and the bar

The warmth of our lawyers to gain a cauſe relating to the eſtate of a private perſon, cannot equal the ambition that the Greek orators had to poſſeſs themſelves of the ſupreme authority in a commonwealth. a lawyer loſes nothing: nay he gets his fee, tho' he loſe the cauſe he undertook. is he young? he applys himſelf to plead elegantly, that he may acquire ſome reputation, without having ever ſtudyed either the grounds of the law, or the great models of antiquity. has he eſtabliſhed his character? he leaves off pleading, and enriches himſelf by chamber practice. the moſt valuable lawyers are thoſe who ſet facts in a clear light; who recur to ſome fixed principle of law; and anſwer all objections according to it. but where are thoſe who

† De notables.

have the art of forcing the aſſent, and moving the hearts of a whole people?

Shall I preſume to ſpeak with the ſame freedom, concerning preachers? God knows how much I reverence the miniſters of his word. but I cannot offend any particular perſon among them, by obſerving in general, that they are not all equally humble and diſintereſted. young men who have little reputation are too forward in preaching. people fancy they ſee that thoſe ſeek their own glory, more than God's: and that they are more earneſt about making their fortune, than for the ſalvation of ſouls. they talk like ſparkling orators, rather than like miniſters of Chriſt, and ſtewards of his myſteries. it was not with this vain pomp of words that St. Peter preached the crucified Jeſus in thoſe ſermons that converted ſo many thouſand people.

Would we learn the rules of a ſerious effectual eloquence from St. Auſtin? he follows Cicero in diſtinguiſhing three different kinds of ſpeaking: he ſays we muſt ſpeak † ſubmiſſively, in an humble familiar way: ‡ mildly, in an engaging, ſoft, inſinuating manner, to make people love the truth: and § nobly, that is, in a lofty vehement ſtrain, when we would captivate men, and reſcue them from the dominion of their paſſions. he adds, that the only reaſon for uſing ſuch expreſſions as may pleaſe people, is, becauſe there are few men reaſonable enough to reliſh ſuch truths in a diſcourſe as

† *Submiſſe.* ‡ *Temperate.* § *Granditer.*

are quite dry and naked. as for the ſublime and vehement kind, he would not have it florid; 'nor ‡ embel-'liſhed with the ornaments of ſpeech: but rather full 'of the moſt pathetic emotions----for the ſpeaker fol-'lowing the impulſe of his thoughts, does not indu-'ſtriouſly ſtudy the beauties of elocution; but natural-'ly uſes ſuch as riſe from the ſubject itſelf.' the ſame father obſerves that a man who fights reſolutely with a ſword enriched with gold and jewels, uſes theſe arms, (without regarding the value of them,) becauſe they are fit for fighting. he adds that God had permitted St. Cyprian to uſe ſome affected ornaments in his letter to Donatus; that poſterity might ſee how much the purity of the Chriſtian doctrine had corrected this ſuperfluous vanity, and brought him to a more grave and modeſt eloquence.

But nothing can be more affecting than the two ſtories that St. Auſtin relates to ſhew us the true way of preaching with ſucceſs. in the firſt inſtance, he was as yet but a prieſt. the holy biſhop Valerius appointed him to preach to the people of Hippo, in order to reclaim them from † riotous feaſting on ſolemn days. he opened the ſcriptures, and read to them the moſt ve-

‡ ----Non tam verborum ornatibus comtum eſt, quam violentum animi affectibus---- fertur quippe impetu ſuo, et elocutionis pulchritudinem, ſi occurrerit, vi rerum rapit, non cura decoris aſſumit. Aug. *de Doct. Chr. L.* IV.

† Epiſt. xxix. ad Alyp.

hement and threatning reproaches. he earneſtly beſought his hearers, 'by the ignominies and the ſorrows, by the croſs, by the blood of Chriſt, not to deſtroy themſelves; to pity him who ſpake to them with ſo much affection; and to ſhew ſome regard to their venerable old biſhop, who, out of tenderneſs to them, had commanded him to inſtruct them in the truth. I did not make them weep, (ſays he,) by firſt weeping over them: but while I preached, their tears prevented mine. I own that then I could not reſtrain myſelf. after we had wept together, I began to entertain great hope of their amendment.' on this occaſion he quite varied from the diſcourſe he had prepared; becauſe he did not now think it ſuitable to their penitent diſpoſition. in fine, he had the ſatisfaction of ſeeing this people tractable, and reformed from that very day.

The other occaſion wherein he powerfully ſwayed the minds of his audience, is thus related by himſelf: 'we muſt not imagine that a man has ſpoken in a lofty ſublime manner, when he receives many acclamations, and great applauſe. theſe are ſometimes given to the loweſt turns of wit, and the ornaments of the moderate ſort of eloquence. but the ſublime ſtrain oft-times overwhelms people's minds with its vehemence: it renders them ſpeechleſs: it melts them into tears. when I endeavoured to perſuade the people of Caeſarea in Mauritania to aboliſh a combat among the citizens, in which relations, brothers, fathers,

'and ſons, being divided into two parties, fought publickly for ſeveral days, at a certain time of the 'year; and every man endeavoured to kill the perſon 'he attacked: according to the utmoſt of my ability, 'I uſed the moſt pathetic expreſſions to extirpate ſuch a 'cruel, inveterate cuſtom from the minds and manners 'of this people. however I thought I had done nothing, 'while I only heard their acclamations. but their tears 'gave me ſome hope: their applauſes ſhewed that I had 'inſtructed them; and that they were pleaſed with my 'diſcourſe: but their tears declared that their minds 'were changed. when I ſaw them weep, I believed 'that this horrible cuſtom they had received from their 'anceſtors, and been ſo long enſlaved to, would be a-'boliſhed-----it is now eight years ago, and upwards, 'and by the grace of God they have been reſtrained 'from attempting any ſuch practice.' if St. Auſtin had weakened his diſcourſe by the affected ornaments of the florid kind of rhetoric, he would never have been able to reform the people of Hippo and Caeſarea.

Demoſthenes likewiſe followed this rule of true eloquence. † 'O Athenians! (ſaid he) do not fancy

† Μὴ γὰρ ὡς θεῷ νομίζετ' ἐκείνῳ τὰ παρόντα πεπηγέναι πράγματα ἀθάνατα, ἀλλὰ μισεῖ τὶς ἐκεῖνον, καὶ δέδιεν, ὦ ἄνδρες Ἀθηναῖοι, καὶ φθονεῖ, καὶ τῶν πάνυ νῦν δοκούντων οἰκείως ἔχειν αὐτῷ----κατέπτηχε μέντοι ταῦτα πάντα νῦν ὑπ' ἔχουσα ἀποστρο-

'that Philip is like a deity, assured of success in all 'his attempts. among those who seem devoted to his 'interest, there are some that hate, and dread, and en- 'vy him-----but your negligence and sloth puts all 'things to a stand-----consider, O Athenians, to what 'condition ye are reduced. this wicked man is gone so 'far as to leave you no choice betwixt vigilance and

φὴν διὰ τὴν ὑμε͂τέραν βραδυτῆτα καὶ ῥαθυμίαν----ὁρᾶτε γὰ͂ρ, ὦ ἄνδρες Αθηναῖοι, τὸ πρᾶγμα οἱ προελήλυθεν ἀσελγείας ἄνθρωπος, ὃς οὐδ' αἵρεσιν ὑμῖν δίδωσι τῶ͂ πράττειν, ἢ ἄγειν ἡσυχίαν, ἀλλ' ἀπειλεῖ, καὶ λόγους ὑπερηφάνους, ὥς φασι, λέγει, καὶ οὐκ οἴδ' ὅτε ἐσιν ἔχων ἃ καλέσραται, μένειν ἐωὶ τύτων, ἀλλ' αἰεί τι προσπεριβάλλεται, καὶ κύκλω παρ[αχῆ μέλλοντας ὑμᾶς καὶ καθημένους περισοιχίζεται. πότ' ἔν, ὦ ἄνδρες Αθηναῖοι, πότε ἃ χρὴ πράξετε; ἐπειδὰν τι γένηται; ἐπειδὰν νὴ Δία ἀνάγκη τις ᾖ; νῦν δὲ τί χρὴ τὰ γι[νόμενα ἡγεῖσθαι; ἐγὼ γὰρ ὅιμαι τοῖς ἐλευθέροις μεγίσην ἀναγκὴν τὴν ὑπὲρ τῶν πραγμάτων αἰσχύνην εἶναι· ἢ βύλεσθε, εἰπὲ μοὶ, περιϊόντες αὐτῶν πυνθάνεσθαι καὶ τὴν ἀγοράν, λέγεταί τι καινόν; γένοιτο γὰ͂ ἄν τι καινότερον ἢ Μακεδὼν ἀνὴρ Αθηναίυς καὶ πολεμῶν, καὶ τὰ τῶν Ελλήνων διοικῶν; τέθνηκε Φίλιππος; ὑ μὰ Δί', ἀλλ' ἀσθενεῖ· τί δ' ὑμῖν διαφέρει; καὶ γὰ͂ ἂν ὅτός τι πάθῃ, ταχέως ὑμεῖς ἕτερον Φίλιππον ποιήσε[σθε----

Demosthenes in Phil. I.

'inactivity. they ſay he threatens you; and talks arrogantly. he is not content now with what he has already conquered: he forms new projects every day; and lays ſnares for you on all ſides, while you continue ſtill backward and ſlothful. when then, O Athenians! when is it that ye will do what ye ought to do? when will ye attempt ſomething? when will neceſſity determine you to act? what muſt we think of what is now a-doing? in my opinion, no neceſſity can be more urgent upon a free people than what ariſes from the ſhame of their paſt ill conduct. will ye ſtill wander about in public places, inquiring after news? what ſtranger news can there be, than that a man of Macedon ſubdues the Athenians, and governs all Greece? is Philip dead? ſays one: no, ſays another, he is only ſick. what avails it, which he is? for if he were dead, you would ſoon raiſe up another Philip.' here good-ſenſe ſpeaks without any other ornament than its native force. the orator makes the truth plain to all the people: he awakens them: he ſpurs them on to action: he ſhews them their impending ruin. every thing is ſpoken for the common-good; not a word to ſhew his own wit: there is no glittering thought: all tends to inſtruct, and move the people.

Indeed the Romans began very late to follow the example of the Greeks, in improving polite learning.

Graiis ingenium, Graiis dedit ore rotundo
Muſa loqui, praeter laudem nullius avaris.

Romani pueri longis rationibus aſſem
Diſcunt in partes centum deducere———
HOR. de Ar. Poet. v. 323---

The Romans were employed about their laws and rights; about war, and husbandry, and commerce: which gave Virgil occaſion to ſay.

Excudent alii ſpirantia mollius aera:
Credo equidem; vivos ducent de marmore vultus.
Orabunt cauſas melius:----

Tu regere imperio populos, Romane, memento:
Hae tibi erunt artes:-----
AEN. vi. v. 848.

Saluſt finely deſcribes the manners of antient Rome; even while he owns that ſhe neglected literature. * 'the 'moſt prudent (ſays he) were always the buſieſt. no 'one exerciſed his wit more than his body. the wor-'thieſt perſons choſe rather to act wiſely, than to de-'claim: and to have their brave deeds applauded by 'others; rather than to bury themſelves in recording 'their neighbour's good actions.'

* Prudentiſſimus quiſque negotioſus maxime erat. ingenium nemo ſine corpore exercebat. optimus quiſque facere, quam dicere; ſua ab aliis benefacta laudari, quam ipſe aliorum narrare malebat. Sal. Bell. Catil.

We muſt acknowledge however, according to Livy's teſtimony, that a ſtrong and popular eloquence was well cultivated at Rome in the days of Manlius. this man who had ſaved the Capitol from the Gauls, tryed to ſtir up the people to ſedition. † 'how long '(ſaid he) will ye be ignorant of your ſtrength; which 'nature diſcovers to the very beaſts? count at leaſt 'how many ye are——I ſhould think ye would fight 'more reſolutely for liberty, than thoſe men for do-'minion——how long will ye look upon me? ye may 'all of you depend on me to the utmoſt, &c.' this powerful orator perſwaded all the people to pardon him, ſtretching out his hands towards the Capitol which he had formerly ſaved. nor could his death be obtained of the multitude, till he was carryed into a ſacred wood; whence he could no longer ſhew them the Capitol. ‡ 'the tribunes found (ſays Livy) that 'ſeeing the people's minds were ſo ſtrongly prepoſſeſt

† Quouſque tandem ignorabitis vires veſtras, quas natura ne belluas quidem ignorare voluit? numerate ſaltem quot ipſi ſitis—tamen acrius crederem, vos pro libertate quam illos pro dominatione certaturos—quouſque me circumſpectabitis? ego quidem nulli veſtrûm deero——

Tit. Liv. L. vi. c. 18.

‡ Apparuit tribunis, niſi oculos quoque hominum liberaſſent a tanti memoria decoris nunquam fore in praeoccupatis beneficio animis, vero crimini locum——ubi crimen valuit.

Tit. Liv. L. vi. ch. xx.

'with the merit of Manlius, it would be impoſſible to 'perſuade them he was really guilty, unleſs they could 'carry them out of the ſight of the Capitol which re- 'minded them of his glorious ſervice——then his 'crime appeared.'

Every one knows what troubles eloquence occaſioned among the Greeks. at Rome Catiline's oratory brought the republic to the brink of ruin. but that eloquence tended only to perſuade people and to move their paſſions. wit was never employed in it. a florid declaimer could have had no influence in public affairs.

Nothing can be more artleſs than Brutus when he † writes to Cicero with ſuch an air of ſuperiority, as to reprove and ſilence him. § 'you beg our life and ſafety

† Particulam literarum tuarum quas miſiſti Octavio legi——at dolore, quantum animo maximum capere poſſum, eadem illa pars epiſtolae ſcriptae ad Octavium de nobis, affecit. ſic enim illi gratias agis de republica, tam ſuppliciter, ac demiſſe (quid ſcribam? pudet conditionis, ac fortunae; ſed tamen ſcribendum eſt: § commendas noſtram ſalutem illi; quae morte qua non perniciosior?) ut prorſus prae te feras, non ſublatam dominationem, ſed dominum commutatum eſſe. verba tua recognoſce, et aude negare ſervientis adverſus regem iſtas eſſe preces. unum ais eſſe quod ab eo poſtuletur, et exſpectetur, ut eos cives, de quibus viri boni, populuſque Romanus bene exiſtimet, ſalvos velit. quid ſi nolit? non erimus? atqui non eſſe, quam eſſe per illum, praeſtat. ego medius fidius non exiſtimo tam omnes Deos averſos eſſe a ſalute populi Romani ut Octavius orandus ſit pro ſalute cujuſquam civis, non dicam

'of Octavius: (says he) what death could be so bad?
'by this request you shew that tyranny is not destroy-
'ed; and that we have only changed our tyrant. con-
'sider your own words; and deny if you can, that
'such a petition is fit to be offered to none but a king;
'and from a slave too. you say that you ask and expect
'only one favour of him; that he would save the lives
'of those citizens who are esteemed by persons of worth,
'and by all the Roman people. what then, unless he
'shall graciously please, we must not live? but it is bet-
'ter to die, than to owe our lives to him. no, I cannot
'think the Gods are such declared enemies to the safe-
'ty of Rome, as to be willing that the life of any citi-
'zen should be begged of Octavius; and far less, the
'lives of those who are the deliverers of the universe

pro liberatoribus orbis terrarum——hoc tu Cicero, posse fateris Octavium, et illi amicus es? aut, si me carum habes, vis Romae videri; cum ut ibi esse possem, commendandus puero illi fuerim? cui quid agis gratias si ut nos salvos esse velit, et patiatur, rogandum putas? an hoc pro beneficio est habendum, quod se, quam Antonium, esse maluerit, a quo ista petenda essent——ista vero imbecillitas et desperatio, cujus culpa non magis in te residet, quam in omnibus aliis, Caesarem in cupiditatem regni impulit: et Antonio——quod si Romanos nos esse meminissemus: non audacius dominari cuperent postremi homines, quam ut nos prohiberemus, tu quidem consularis, et tantorum scelerum vindex (quibus oppressis vereor ne in breve tempus dilata sit abs te pernicies,) qui potes intueri quae gesseris——

Apud Cicer. Lib. Epist. ad Brut. ep. xvi.

'——— O Cicero, can you confeſs that he has ſuch 'power; and ſtill be one of his friends? or if you love 'me, can you deſire to ſee me at Rome, when I cannot 'come thither without obtaining that boy's permiſ-'ſion? for what do you thank him? if you think that 'our life muſt ſtill be begged of him as a favour? muſt 'we reckon it a happineſs that he chuſes to have ſuch 'favours aſked rather of him than of Antony? —— 'this weakneſs and deſpair which others are guilty of 'as well as you, firſt emboldened Caeſar to make him-'ſelf king——but if we remembered that we are Ro-'mans, the ambition of theſe baſe men to uſurp the 'government would not have been greater than our cou-'rage in defending it. I am afraid that you who have been 'conſul and avenged the public of ſo many crimes have 'thereby only delayed our ruin for a ſhort while. how 'can you behold what you have done?'-----how weak, indecent, and mean muſt this diſcourſe have appeared, if it had been filled with witticiſms and quaint conceits?

But now ſhall thoſe who ought to ſpeak like apoſtles, gather up, with induſtrious affectation, thoſe flowers of rhetoric that Demoſthenes, Manlius and Brutus trampled on? ſhall we imagine that the miniſters of the goſpel have leſs concern for the eternal ſalvation of ſouls, than Demoſthenes for the liberty of his country; leſs zeal to do good, than Manlius had ambition to ſeduce the multitude; or leſs reſolution than Brutus, who choſe death rather than to owe his life to a tyrant?

I own, that the florid kind of eloquence has its beauties: but they are quite misapplyed in those discourses that ought to be animated with the noblest passions; and wherein there is no room for delicate turns of wit. the florid sort of rhetoric can never come up to the true sublime. what would the antients have said of a tragedy, wherein Hecuba laments her misfortunes with points of wit. true grief does not talk thus. or what could we think of a preacher who should, in the most affected jingle of words, shew sinners the divine judgment hanging over their head, and hell open under their feet? there is a † decency to be observed in our language, as in our cloaths. a disconsolate widow does not mourn in fringes, ribbons, and embroidery. and an apostolical minister ought not to preach the word of God in a pompous stile, full of affected ornaments. the Pagans would not have endured to see even a comedy so ill-acted.

Ut ridentibus arridենt, ita flentibus adflent
Humani vultus. si vis me flere, dolendum est
Primum ipsi tibi: tunc tua me infortunia laedent,
Telephe, vel Peleu: male si mandata loqueris,

† Nunc quid aptum sit, hoc est, quid maxime deceat in oratione, videamus: quamquam id quidem perspicuum est, non omni causae, nec auditori, neque personae, neque tempori congruere orationis unum genus——omnique in re posse quod deceat facere, artis et naturae est; scire, quid, quandoque deceat, prudentiae.

Cicero de Orat. lib. iii. §. 55.

Aut dormitabo, aut ridebo: triſtia moeſtum
Vultum verba decent-----

Hor. de Ar. Poet. v. 101.

We muſt not judge ſo unfavourably of eloquence as to reckon it only a frivolous art that a declaimer uſes to impoſe upon the weak imagination of the multitude, and to ſerve his own ends. it is a very ſerious art; deſigned to inſtruct people; ſuppreſs their paſſions; and reform their manners; to ſupport the laws; direct public councils; and to make men good and happy. the more pains an haranguer takes to dazzle me, by the artifices of his diſcourſe, the more I ſhould deſpiſe his vanity. his eagerneſs to diſplay his wit would in my judgment render him unworthy of the leaſt admiration. I love a ſerious preacher, who ſpeaks for my ſake; and not for his own; who ſeeks my ſalvation, and not his own vain-glory. he beſt deſerves to be heard who uſes ſpeech only to cloath his thoughts; and his thoughts only to promote truth and virtue. nothing is more deſpicable than a profeſſed declaimer, who retails his diſcourſes, as a quack does his medicines.

I am willing this point ſhould be determined by the very heathens. Plato would not permit in his republic ſuch effeminate notes of muſic as the Lydians uſed. the Lacedemonians excluded from theirs all inſtruments that were too compounded; leſt they ſhould

ſoften the people's temper. ſuch harmony as ſerves merely to pleaſe the ear, is an amuſement fit only for ſoft and idle perſons; and is unworthy of a well-ordered commonwealth. it is no farther valuable than the ſounds agree to the ſenſe of the words; and the words inſpire virtuous ſentiments. painting, ſculpture, and other elegant arts, ought to have the ſame end. this ought undoubtedly to be the deſign of eloquence too. pleaſure ought to be mixt with it only to ſerve as a counter-poiſe to men's vicious paſſions; and to render virtue amiable.

I would have an orator prepare himſelf a long time by general ſtudy, to acquire a large ſtock of knowledge; and to qualify himſelf for compoſing well: that ſo he might need the leſs preparation for each particular diſcourſe. I would have him naturally a man of good-ſenſe; and to reduce all he ſays to † good-ſenſe as the ſtandard of his diſcourſe. his ſtudies ſhould be ſolid: he ſhould apply himſelf to reaſon juſtly; and induſtriouſly avoid all ſubtil and over-refined notions. he ſhould diſtruſt his imagination; and not let it in-

† Caeterarum artium ſtudia fere reconditis, atque abditis e fontibus hauriuntur: dicendi autem omnis ratio in medio poſita, communi quodam in uſu, atque in hominum more et ſermone verſatur: ut in caeteris id maxime excellat, quod longiſſime ſit ab imperitorum intelligentia ſenſuque disjunctum: in dicendo autem vitium vel maximum eſt, a vulgari genere orationis, atque a conſuetudine communis ſenſus abhorrere.

Cicero de Orat. lib. i. §. 3.

fluence his judgment. he ſhould ground every diſcourſe upon ſome evident principle; and from that draw the moſt obvious and natural conſequences.

Scribendi recte ſapere eſt et principium et fons:
Rem tibi Socraticae poterunt oſtendere chartae:
Verbaque proviſam rem non invita ſequentur.
Qui didicit patriae, quid debeat, et quid amicis,
Quo ſit amore parens, quo frater amandus et hoſpes:
---------- ille profecto
Reddere perſonae ſcit convenientia cuique.
Hor. de Ar. Poet. v. 309.

Generally ſpeaking, a florid declaimer knows neither the principles of ſound philoſophy, nor thoſe of the Chriſtian doctrine, for perfecting the manners of men. he minds nothing but bright expreſſions, and ingenious turns. what he chiefly wants is ſolid knowledge. he can talk handſomely without knowing what he ought to ſay. he weakens the moſt important truths by his vain and elaborate turns of fancy or expreſſion.

On the contrary, the true orator † adorns his diſcourſe only with bright truths, noble ſentiments, and ſuch ſtrong expreſſions as are adapted to his ſubject,

† Sed ornatus (repetam enim) virilis, fortis et ſanctus ſit: nec effoeminatam laevitatem, nec fuco eminentem colorem amet; ſanguine et viribus niteat.
Quint. lib. viii. c. 3.

and to the paſſions he would excite. he thinks; he feels; and his words naturally flow from him. 'he does 'not depend on words (ſays St. Auſtin) but they on 'him.' a man that has a great and active ſoul, with a natural eaſineſs of ſpeech, improved by practice, needs never fear the want of expreſſions. his moſt ordinary diſcourſes will have exquiſite ſtrokes of oratory that the florid haranguers can never imitate. he is not a ſlave to † words; but cloſely purſues the truth. he knows that vehemence is as it were the ſoul of eloquence. he firſt lays down the principle which muſt ſerve to clear the ſubject he treats of. he ſets this principle in the fulleſt light. he turns it every way to give his floweſt hearers a clear view of it. he draws the remoteſt conſequences from it by a conciſe and obvious train of reaſoning. every truth is ſet in its proper place with regard to the whole: it prepares, leads on, and ſupports, another truth that needed its aſſiſtance. this juſt order prevents the trouble of needleſs repetitions. but it retrenches none of thoſe uſeful ones, that ſerve to direct the hearer's attention frequently to that chief point on which the whole depends. the orator muſt often ſhew him the concluſion that is contained in the principle: and from this principle, as from the center, he muſt ſpread a due light over all the parts of the diſcourſe: as a ſkilful painter places the light ſo in

† Propterea non debet quiſquam ubi maxima rerum momenta verſantur, de verbis eſſe ſollicitus. Quint. lib. viii. c. 3.

his picture, as from one ſingle point to diſtribute a due proportion of it to every figure. the whole diſcourſe is one; and may be reduced to one ſingle propoſition, ſet in the ſtrongeſt light, by various views and explications of it. this unity of deſign ſhews the whole performance at one view: as in the public places of a city, one may ſee all the ſtreets and gates of it, when the ſtreets are ſtraight, equal, and duly proportioned. the diſcourſe is the propoſition unfolded: and the propoſition is an abſtract of the diſcourſe.

Denique ſit quodvis ſimplex duntaxat et unum.
Hor. de Ar. Poet. v. 23.

He who perceives not the beauty and force of this unity and order, has never ſeen any thing in its full light. he has only ſeen ſhadows in Plato's cavern. what ſhould we ſay of an architect who could ſee no difference between a ſtately palace, whoſe apartments are adjuſted with the exacteſt proportion, ſo as to make one uniform ſtructure; and a confuſed heap of little buildings which do not compoſe one regular plan, tho' they be all placed together? what compariſon is there betwixt the Coliſæum, and a confuſed multitude of irregular houſes in a city? there can be no true unity in any compoſure, unleſs there can be nothing taken from it without ſpoiling it. it never has a right order but when we cannot diſplace any part without weakening,

obſcuring, and diſordering the whole. this is what Horace explains perfectly well.

—cui lecta potenter erit res
Nec facundia deſeret hunc, nec lucidus ordo.
Ordinis haec virtus erit, et Venus, aut ego fallor
Ut jam nunc dicat, jam nunc debentia dici
Pleraque differat, et praeſens in tempus omittat.
De Ar. Poet.—

An author who does not thus methodize his diſcourſe is not fully maſter of his ſubject: he has but an imperfect taſte, and a low genius. order indeed is an excellence we ſeldom meet with in the productions of the mind. a diſcourſe is perfect when it has at once method, propriety, ſtrength, and vehemence. but in order to this, the orator muſt have viewed, examined, and comprehended every point, that he may range each word in its ‡ proper place. this is what an igno-

‡ *It is an infallible proof of the want of juſt integrity in every writing, from the Epopeia, or heroic poem, down to the familiar epiſtle, or ſlighteſt eſſay either in verſe or proſe, if every ſeveral part or portion fits not its proper place ſo exactly, that the leaſt tranſpoſition would be impracticable ——if there be any paſſage in the middle, or end, which might have ſtood in the beginning; or any in the beginning, which might have ſtood as well in the middle or end; there is properly in ſuch a piece, neither beginning, middle, or end: it is a mere rhapſody, not a work. and the more it aſſumes the air or*

rant declaimer, who is guided by his imagination, can never diſcern.

Iſocrates is ſmooth, inſinuating, and elegant: but can we compare him to Homer? I will go farther; and am not afraid to ſay that I think Demoſthenes a † greater orator than Cicero. I proteſt there is no man admires Cicero more than I do. he embelliſhes every thing he handles. he is an honour to ſpeech: and makes that happy uſe of words that no one elſe could. he has a vaſt variety of wit. he is even conciſe and vehement when he deſigns to be ſo againſt Catiline, Verres, and Antony: but we may perceive ſome finery in his diſcourſes. his art is wonderful: but ſtill we diſcern it. while he is concerned for the ſafety of the republic, he does not forget that he is an orator; nor does he let others forget it. Demoſthenes ſeems tranſ-

appearance of a real work, the more ridiculous it becomes.

Characteriſticks, vol. iii. p. 259, 260.

† Quorum ego virtutes plerasque arbitror ſimiles, conſilium, ordinem dividendi, praeparandi, probandi rationem; omnia denique, quae ſunt inventionis. in eloquendo eſt aliqua diverſitas; denſior ille, [Demoſthenes;] hic [Cicero] copioſior: ille concludit adſtrictius; hic latius pugnat: ille acumine ſemper; hic frequenter et pondere: illi nihil detrahi poteſt; huic nihil adjici: curae plus in hoc; in illo naturae——cedendum vero in hoc quidem, quod ille et prior fuit, et ex magna parte Ciceronem, quantus eſt, fecit. nam mihi videtur M. Tullius cum ſe totum ad imitationem Graecorum contuliſſet, effinxiſſe vim Demoſthenis, copiam Platonis, jucunditatem Iſocratis.

Quint. lib. x. c. 1.

ported, and to have nothing in view but his country. he does not ſtudy what is beautiful; but naturally falls into it, without reflecting. he is above admiration. he uſes ſpeech, as a modeſt man does his cloaths only to cover himſelf. he thunders; he lightens: he is like a torrent that hurrys every thing along with it. we cannot criticize him; for, he is maſter of our paſſions. we conſider the things he ſays, and not his words. we loſe ſight of him: we think of Philip only who uſurps every thing. I am charmed with theſe two orators; but I confeſs that Tully's prodigious art and magnificent eloquence affects me leſs than the vehement ſimplicity of Demoſthenes.

† Art leſſens and expoſes itſelf when it is too open. thus Longinus ſays that ‡ 'Iſocrates blundered like a 'ſchool-boy;----when he began one of his panegyrics 'in this manner: ſeeing ſuch is the nature of elo-

† Sed hoc patì non poſſumus, et perire artem putamus, niſi appareat: cum deſinat ars eſſe, ſi apparet.

Quintil. lib. iv. c. 2.

‡ Ὁ γὼν Ισοκράτης, ὑκ οἶδ' ὅπως, παῤδὸς πρᾶγμα ἔπαθεν----Ὁ δ' εὐθὺς ἐν τῇ εἰσβολῇ [τὺ παγηγυρικοῦ] ταῦτα τίθησιν· 'ἐπειθ' οἱ λόγοι τοσαύτην 'ἔχυσι δύναμιν, ὥωδ' οἷον 'τ' εἶναι καὶ τὰ μεγάλα 'ταπεινὰ ποιῆσαι, ἢ τοῖς 'μικροῖς περιθεῖναι μέγε-'θος, ἢ τὰ παλαιὰ καιρῶς εἰπεῖν, ἢ περὶ τῶν 'νεωστὶ γεγενημένων ἀρ-'χαίως διελθεῖν. σύκουν, φησὶ τὶς, Ισόκρατες, ὕτως μέλλεις καὶ τὰ περὶ

'quence that it can make great things appear little, and 'ſmall things to ſeem great; that it can repreſent the 'oldeſt things as new; and the neweſt as old'—'is it 'thus, O Iſocrates (one might ſay) that you are going 'to change all things with regard to the Lacedemoni-'ans, and the Athenians? by this manner of praiſing 'eloquence he makes a preamble to caution his hear-'ers againſt believing any thing he ſhould ſay.' in effect it was to declare to the world that orators are only ſophiſts ſuch as Plato's Gorgias was, and the other declaimers of Greece; who perverted rhetoric to impoſe on the people.

Since eloquence requires that an orator ſhould be a man of probity, and be eſteemed ſuch, if he would expect ſucceſs in the moſt common affairs of life: how much greater reaſon have we to believe this ſaying of St. Auſtin concerning thoſe who ought to ſpeak like apoſtles? 'he preaches ſublimely whoſe life is irre-'proachable.' what good can we expect from the diſcourſes of a young man without ſolid knowledge, without experience, without an eſtabliſhed character; who makes a diverſion of oratory; and perhaps endeavours to raiſe his fortune by that miniſtry which obliges us to

Λακεδαιμονίων καὶ Αθηναίων ἀναλλάττειν; Σχέδον γὰρ τὸ τῶν λόγων ἐγκώμιον ἀπιστίας τῆς καθ' αὑτοῦ τοῖς ἀκούουσι παράγγελμα καὶ προοίμιον ἐξέθηκε.

Longinus. §. xxxviii.

be poor with Jeſus Chriſt; to bear our croſs with him, by ſelf-denial; and to command men's paſſions in order to convert them?

Before I conclude this head, I muſt add a few words concerning the eloquence of the fathers: for, ſome learned men judge of them too unfavourably. they form a character of it from Tertullian's harſh metaphors; or ſome ſwelling periods of St. Cyprian; from ſome perplexed paſſages of St. Ambroſe, ſome over-refined jingling antitheſes of St. Auſtin; or ſome quibbles of St. Chryſologus. but they ſhould conſider the corrupted taſte of the times in which the fathers lived. Rome began to loſe its juſt taſte ſoon after Auguſtus' reign. Juvenal is leſs delicate than Horace. there is a ſhocking bombaſt in the ſtile of Seneca the tragedian, and Lucan. at length Rome intirely declined. ſolid learning ran low at Athens, and the falſe refinements of wit prevailed, when St. Baſil and St. Gregory Nazianzen went thither. the fathers being trained up under the weak declaimers of their times were led away by the common prejudices; which the wiſeſt men ſcarce ever reſiſt. it was not thought tolerable then to ſpeak in an eaſy natural way. the world was in the ſame condition as to eloquence, that we ſhould be in now, as to dreſs, if no body dared to appear in a fine cloath, without loading it with the thickeſt embroidery. according to this faſhion, we behoved always to declaim; and never talk eaſily to an audience. but if we had the patience

to examine the works of the fathers, we ſhould find many valuable things in them. St. Cyprian has a grandeur and vehemence that ſomewhat reſembles Demoſthenes. in St. Chryſoſtom we find an exact judgment, noble images, and a ſolid morality explained in the moſt obvious agreeable manner. St. Auſtin is at once ſublime and popular. he leads us to the higheſt notions, by the moſt familiar turns of expreſſion. he aſks queſtions; he puts queſtions to himſelf; he anſwers them. his diſcourſe is a ſort of converſation between him, and his audience. he uſes pertinent compariſons to clear every doubt. we ſee him ſometimes condeſcend to the loweſt and coarſeſt apprehenſions of the people, in order to reclaim them. St. Bernard was a prodigy in an age of the groſſeſt ignorance. we find in his works delicacy, and nobleneſs, a happy turn; and both tenderneſs, and vehemence. we are ſurprized at every thing that is great or beautiful in the writings of the fathers, when we know the times in which they lived. we forgive Montaigne his Gaſcon expreſſions; and Marot, his old language: why then may we not overlook in the fathers, the ſwelling ſtile of their age, with which they expreſs the moſt valuable truths, in the livelieſt manner.

But I am not here to attempt a work that is reſerved for ſome learned pen. it is enough that I hint in general what may be expected from the author of an excellent rhetoric. he might adorn his works by imi-

tating Cicero's manner of mixing examples and precepts together. 'they who have a penetrating vehement temper (ſays St. Auſtin) learn oratory better by reading 'the works of eloquent authors, than by ſtudying the 'rules of art.' one might give an agreeable account of the different characters of orators, their manner, their taſte, and their maxims. they ought even to be compared together; to enable the reader to judge of the diſtinct excellence of each.

§. V. A treatiſe on poetry ſeems to be as much wanted as a rhetoric. poetry is a more ſerious and uſeful art than common people imagine. religion conſecrated it to its own uſe from the very beginning of the world. before men had a text of divine ſcripture, the ſacred ſongs they learned by heart preſerved the remembrance of the creation, and the tradition of God's wonderful works. nothing can equal the magnificence and tranſport of the ſongs of Moſes. the book of Job is a poem full of the boldeſt and moſt majeſtic figures. the Song of Solomon gracefully and tenderly expreſſes the myſterious union of God with the ſoul of man which becomes his ſpouſe. the pſalms will be the admiration and comfort of all ages, and all nations that know the true God. the whole ſcripture is full of poetry, even in thoſe places, where there is not the leaſt appearance of verſification. †

† See page 115.

Beſides, poetry gave the world its firſt laws: it ſoftened men's wild and ſavage tempers: it drew them from the foreſts where they wandered about; and civilized them: it governed their manners: it formed families and nations: and made them reliſh the ſweets of ſociety: it reſtored the exerciſe of reaſon: it cultivated virtue; and invented polite arts: it animated people's courage for war; and diſpoſed them likewiſe for the calm enjoyments of peace.

Silveſtres homines ſacer interpreſque deorum
Caedibus et victu foedo deterruit Orpheus;
Dictus ob hoc lenire tygres, rapidoſque leones:
Dictus et Amphion, Thebanae conditor arcis
Saxa movere ſono teſtudinis, et prece blanda
Ducere quo vellet. fuit haec ſapientia quondam.

Sic honor et nomen divinis vatibus atque
Carminibus venit. poſt hos inſignis Homerus
Tyrtaeuſque mares animos in martia bella
Verſibus exacuit——

Hor. de Ar. Poet. v. 391.

Speech animated by lively images, noble figures, the tranſport of paſſions, and the charms of harmony, was called the language of the Gods: even the moſt barbarous nations felt its power.

As poetaſters deſerve the utmoſt neglect; ſo we

cannot enough admire and encourage a † true poet, who does not uſe poetry as a ſport of fancy, to gain himſelf a vain applauſe; but imploys it to inſpire men with the love of wiſdom, virtue, and religion.

May I not be allowed here to expreſs the concern it gives me when I conſider that the perfecting our French verſification ſeems almoſt impoſſible. what

† *I muſt confeſs there is hardly any where to be found a more inſipid race of mortals than thoſe whom we moderns are contented to call poets, for having attained the chiming faculty of a language with an injudicious random uſe of wit and fancy. but for the man who truly and in a juſt ſenſe deſerves the name of poet, and who as a real maſter, or architect in the kind can deſcribe both men and manners, and give to an action its juſt body and proportions, be will be found, if I miſtake not, a very different creature. ſuch a poet----forms a whole coherent and proportioned in itſelf, with due ſubjection and ſubordinacy of conſtituent parts. he notes the boundaries of the paſſions, and knows their exact tones and meaſures; by which he juſtly repreſents them; marks the ſublime of ſentiments and action; and diſtinguiſhes the beautiful, from the deformed; the amiable, from the odious. the moral artiſt who can thus imitate the Creator, and is thus knowing in the inward form and ſtructure of his fellow-creature, will hardly, I preſume, be found unknowing in himſelf, or at a loſs in thoſe numbers which make the harmony of a mind. for, knavery is mere diſſonance and diſproportion. and tho' villains may have ſtrong tones and natural capacities of action; it is impoſſible that true judgment and ingenuity ſhould reſide, where harmony and honeſty have no being.*

Charact. vol. i. p. 207, 208.

confirms me in this apprehenſion, is, that our greateſt poets have made many ſorry verſes. no body has wrote finer ones than Malherbe: but how many has he made that are far below his character? even thoſe of our moſt admired poets, who have been moſt uniform and ſteddy in their compoſures, have yet wrote ſeveral lines that are rugged, obſcure, and heavy. by endeavouring to give their thoughts a delicate turn, they ſometimes make them unintelligible. they often uſe forced epithets, to hit the rhyme: ſo that ſeveral of their verſes might be ſtruck out, without loſing one beauty. this eaſily appears when we examine their works rigorouſly.

If I be not miſtaken our verſification loſes more than it gains by † rhyme. it loſes much variety, eaſineſs, and harmony. the rhyme that a poet labours after, makes him ſometimes lengthen, and enervate his period. he is forced to uſe two or three uſeleſs lines

† *But thoſe reverend bards [Shakeſpear, Milton, and others.]-----to their eternal honour have withal been the firſt of Europeans who, ſince the Gothic model of poetry, attempted to throw off the horrid diſcord of jingling rhyme. they have aſſerted antient poetic liberty, and have happily broken the ice for thoſe who are to follow them; and who treading in their footſteps, may at leiſure poliſh our language, lead our ear to finer pleaſure, and find out the true rythmus and harmonious numbers which alone can ſatisfy a juſt judgment, and muſe-like apprehenſion.*

Characteriſticks, vol. i. p. 217, 218.

to introduce the rhyme he wants. indeed poets are more § ſcrupulous about the exactneſs of their rhymes, than the ſolidity of their thoughts and ſentiments, the clearneſs of their ſtile, the eaſineſs of their turn, and the nobleneſs of their expreſſions. rhyme gives us only the ſame ſounds in the laſt ſyllable of each couplet; which is ſo tireſome and grating to the ear, that we avoid it in proſe. this repetition of the ſame ſound is even cloying in great heroic verſes, where two maſculine terms are always followed by two feminine.

It is true we find more harmony in odes and ſtanza's, where the rhymes being intermixt have a greater cadence and variety. but our lofty heroic verſes, which

§ *But ſo much are our Britiſh poets taken up in ſeeking out that monſtrous ornament which we call rhyme, that it is no wonder if other ornaments, and real graces are unthought of. however ſince in ſome parts of poetry (eſpecially in the dramatic) we have been ſo happy as to triumph over this barbarous taſte; it is unaccountable that our poets who from this privilege ought to undertake ſome farther refinements, ſhould remain ſtill upon the ſame level as before. it is a ſhame to our authors that in their elegant ſtile, and metred proſe there ſhould not be found a peculiar grace and harmony reſulting from a more natural and eaſy diſengagement of their periods, and from a careful avoiding the encounter of the ſhocking conſonants and jarring ſounds, to which our language is ſo unfortunately ſubject——even a proſe-author who attempts to write politely ſhould endeavour to confine himſelf within thoſe bounds, which can never, without breach of harmony, be exceeded in any juſt metre, or agreeable pronunciation.*

Charact. vol. iii. p. 263, 4, 5.

require the ſweeteſt, moſt various, and moſt majeſtic ſounds, have often leaſt of this perfection.

Pindaric verſes have oft-times the ſame intermixture of rhymes, that odes have: and their boundleſs irregularity leaves the poet room to vary their meaſure and cadence, as he pleaſes either to riſe, or fall, in his verſe. M. de la Fontaine has made an excellent uſe of this freedom.

However I would not propoſe to have rhyme quite laid aſide: our verſification could not ſubſiſt without it. our language has not that diverſity of long and ſhort ſyllables, which in the Greek, and the Latin, compoſed the feet, and the meaſure of verſe. but I am of opinion it would be proper to allow our poets a little more liberty in their rhymes, that they might be more exact in the ſenſe and harmony of their verſes. by abating ſomewhat of the exactneſs in rhymes, reaſon and good-ſenſe would be more cloſely followed. they might the more eaſily hit what is truly beautiful, great, ſimple, and natural------this would free our greateſt poets from the neceſſity of uſing forced turns, ſtiff epithets, and perplext conceits.

The example of the Greeks, and Latins, might encourage us to take this liberty. their verſification was, beyond all compariſon, eaſier than ours. rhyme alone is more difficult than all their rules together: and yet the Greeks had recourſe to their different dialects. beſides, both Greeks and Latins had ſuperfluous ſyllables

which they freely added to compleat their verſes. Horace took great liberty this way in the verſification of his ſatyrs, his epiſtles, and even in ſome odes. why might not we find out ſome ſuch reliefs; ſeeing our verſification is ſo cramping, and ſo apt to allay the fire of a good poet?

The ſeverity of our language in not allowing almoſt any inverſion of phraſes ſtill vaſtly increaſes the difficulty of making French verſe. a poet is forced to put his fancy on the rack in every compoſure; without the leaſt advantage, or neceſſity. one would be apt to think that we ſtudied rather what is perplexing, than what is beautiful. for, the placing a ſyllable right, coſts our poets as much thought and pains, as the nobleſt ſentiments, the livelieſt painting, or the boldeſt touches. on the contrary, the antients, by frequent inverſions, made the ſweeteſt cadence, variety, and paſſionate expreſſions, eaſy to the poet. inverſions were even turned into noble figures; and kept the mind ſuſpended, in expectation of ſomething great. we have an inſtance of this in Virgil's eighth eclogue:

Paſtorum muſam, Damonis et Alpheſiboei,
Immemor herbarum quos eſt mirata juvenca
Certantes, quorum ſtupefactae carmine lynces,
Et mutata ſuos requierunt flumina curſus;
Damonis muſam dicemus, et Alpheſiboei.

Ecl. viii. v. 1--5.

If you take away this inverſion, and place the words according to the grammatical order and conſtruction, you deſtroy all their force, and grace, and harmony. it is this ſuſpenſion that ſtrikes the reader. how faint and ſcrupulous is our language in this point? dare we imitate this verſe in which every word is placed differently from the grammatical order?

Aret ager, vitio moriens ſitit aeris herba.

When Horace would prepare his readers for ſome great object, he leads them on without ſhewing them whither they are going, or giving them time to breathe:

Qualem miniſtrum fulminis alitem.
Hor. Od. Lib. iv. Od. 3.

I confeſs we muſt not introduce a great number of theſe inverſions into our language all at once: we are not accuſtomed to them: they would ſeem harſh and very obſcure. methinks M. Boileau's Pindaric ode is not free from that imperfection. I take the more freedom in making this remark, becauſe in other reſpects I admire the works of that great poet. we ought to chuſe the gentleſt inverſions at firſt, and ſuch as come neareſt to thoſe our language already permits. for inſtance our whole nation have approved of theſe:

La ſe perdent ces noms de maitre de la terre,

Et tombent avec eux d'une chute commune
Tous ceux que leur fortune
Faiſoit leurs ſerviteurs.

Malherbe, Liv. vi.

Ronſard undertook too much at once. by his obſcure and bold tranſpoſitions he forced our language too much; and made it harſh and confuſed. he introduced too many compounded words to which the nation had not been accuſtomed. he ſpoke French in Greek, in ſpite of the French themſelves. I think he was in the right to open ſome new way of enriching our language; to give force to our poetry, and to facilitate our verſification, which began then to be improved. but in the point of language nothing can be effected without the conſent of thoſe for whom we write. we ought never to make two ſteps at once: but muſt ſtop ſhort when we find the multitude do not follow us. ſingularity is dangerous almoſt in every thing; and can never be excuſed in things that depend on cuſtom only.

The ſhocking freedom of Ronſard led us a little into the oppoſite extreme. we have ſo cramped and impoveriſhed our language, that it dares never proceed otherwiſe than according to the moſt ſcrupulous and uniform method of grammar. a nominative ſubſtantive appears firſt, leading in its adjectives as it were by the

hand: its verb conſtantly follows it, attended with an adverb that admits of nothing between them: and the rule next requires an accuſative which muſt always keep its place. this excludes all ſuſpenſion of mind, all expectation, ſurprize, variety; and oft-times all noble cadence.

On the other hand I grant that we ought never to run the hazard of ambiguity. I would even have † Quintilian's rule generally obſerved, ſo as to avoid ſuch expreſſions as the reader may indeed underſtand; but which he could not underſtand, if he did not ſupply ſomething that they want. we ſhould uſe ‡ a ſimple, exact, eaſy ſtile, that lays every thing open to the reader, and even prevents his attention. when an author writes for the public, he ſhould take all the pains imaginable to prevent his readers having any. all the labour ſhould be his own: and he ſhould leave nothing but pleaſure and inſtruction to his readers. they ſhould never be put to the trouble of finding out his meaning. none but thoſe who deal in riddles are allowed to puzzle people. Auguſtus would rather have frequent repetitions uſed, than that there ſhould be the leaſt de-

† Quare non ut intelligere poſſit, ſed ne omnino poſſit non intelligere curandum.
Inſtit. lib. viii. c. 2.

‡ Nobis prima ſit virtus perſpicuitas, propria verba, rectus ordo, non in longum dilata concluſio: nihil neque deſit, neque ſuperfluat. ita ſermo et doctis probabilis, et planus imperitis erit.
Quint. Inſtit. lib. viii. c. 2.

gree of obſcurity in a diſcourſe. indeed the firſt care of one that writes only to be underſtood, is to eaſe his readers by expreſſing himſelf clearly.

It muſt be owned that our greateſt French poets, being cramped by the ſtrict rules of our verſification, ſometimes fail in this point of entire perſpicuity. he who thinks much, has much to ſay; and is unwilling to loſe any thing: he ſets a value on all the fruits of his invention; and labours hard to crowd various thoughts into the narrow compaſs of a verſe. he affects too great delicacy: and this degenerates into forced, far-fetched conceits. he endeavours to dazzle and ſurprize his readers, to convince them that he has more wit than they; and to gain their admiration. whereas he ſhould never diſcover more wit than they have; but encreaſe and quicken theirs, without diſplaying his own. an author is not ſatisfyed with plain reaſon, native graces, and lively ſentiments which are the true perfection of a diſcourſe: ſelf-love makes him overſhoot the mark. he uſes no moderation in ſtudying what is beautiful; and knows not how to check his fancy by avoiding gaudy ſuperfluous ornaments. according to the Italian proverb, 'he loſes what is good 'by aiming at better.' he runs into the fault of throwing too much ſalt and wit into his compoſures; and giving too high a goût to what he ſeaſons. he imitates thoſe who load a ſuit with too much embroidery. they who have a juſt taſte avoid exceſs in every thing; even

in wit itſelf. wit grows tireſome when it is affected, and laviſhly uſed. he ſhews moſt wit who knows when to check its ſallies, that he may adapt himſelf to people's capacities, and ſmooth the way for them. thoſe poets who have the moſt ſoaring genius, and the greateſt reach of thought and invention ſhould particularly guard themſelves againſt ſuch an exceſs of wit. they will ſay perhaps that it is a beautiful failing, a noble, and very uncommon one. I own it is ſo: but it is a real failing, and one of the moſt difficult to be corrected. Horace would have an author rigorouſly ſtrict in criticizing his own works.

Vir bonus et prudens verſus reprehendet inertes;
Culpabit duros; incomtis allinet atrum
Tranſverſo calamo ſignum; ambitioſa recidet
Ornamenta; parum claris lucem dare coget.
Arguet ambigue dictum; mutanda notabit:
Hor. de Ar. Poet. v. 445.

There is much gained by loſing all ſuperfluous ornaments, and confining ourſelves to ſuch beauties as are ſimple, eaſy, clear, and ſeemingly negligent. in poetry, as well as in architecture, all the neceſſary parts ſhould be turned into natural ornaments. but that which ſerves merely as an ornament is ſuperfluous: lay it aſide; there will be nothing wanting: vanity is the only ſufferer by the loſs. an author that has too much wit,

and will always ſhow it, wearies and exhauſts mine. I do not deſire ſo very much, if he ſhewed leſs, he would give me time to breathe; and be far more agreeable. he keeps my thoughts too much upon the ſtretch: the reading of his verſes becomes a mere ſtudy. ſo many flaſhes dazzle me. I love a gentle light that refreſhes my weak eyes. I chuſe an agreeable poet that adapts himſelf to common capacities: who does every thing for their ſakes; and nothing for his own. I would have a ſublime ſo familiar, ſo ſweet, and ſo ſimple, that at firſt every reader would be apt to think he could eaſily have hit on it himſelf; tho' very few are really capable of it. I prefer what is amiable, to what is ſurprizing and wonderful. I would have a man that makes me forget he is an author; and ſeems to converſe with me upon the level. I would have him ſet before my eyes, a labourer who is concerned for his crop; a ſhepherd that knows nothing beyond his flock and his village; a nurſe tenderly anxious for her infant. I would have him turn my attention, not on himſelf, but on the ſhepherds whom he makes to ſpeak.

Deſpectus tibi ſum; nec qui ſim quaeris Alexi:
Quam dives pecoris nivei, quam lactis abundans.
Mille meae Siculis errant in montibus agnae.
Lac mihi non aeſtate, novum non frigore deſit;
Canto quae ſolitus, ſi quando armenta vocabat
Amphion Dircaeus in Actaeo Aracynthо.

Nec ſum adeo informis, nuper me in littore vidi,
Cum placidum ventis ſtaret mare———
Virg. Ecl. ii. v. 18.

How much more beautiful is this rural ſimplicity than a nice over-ſtrained turn of wit?

Ex noto fictum carmen ſequar; ut ſibi quivis
Speret idem; ſudet multum, fruſtraque laboret
Auſus idem. tantum ſeries junctura pollet,
Tantum de medio ſumptis accedit honoris.
Hor. de Ar. Poet. v. 240.

How truly great is he who ſtoops thus to his ſubject, that he may paint every thing to the life; and hit the various characters he draws! how much is he above what we call ingenuity, when he is not afraid of concealing a part of his wit! a work cannot be truly beautiful, unleſs the author keep himſelf out of ſight, and let me forget him. he muſt leave me alone in full liberty. for inſtance Virgil diſappears; and I fancy that I ſee this pleaſant abode.

Muſoſi fontes, et ſomno mollior herba.
Ecl. vii. v. 45.

I cannot help wiſhing I were in this other place;

——ô mihi tum quam molliter oſſa quieſcant,
Veſtra meos olim ſi fiſtula dicat amores!
Atque utinam ex vobis unus, veſtrique fuiſſem
Aut cuſtos gregis, aut maturae vinitor uvae!
Hic gelidi fontes, hic mollia prata, Lycori
Hic nemus——

Virg. Ecl. x. v. 33.

I almoſt envy the happineſs of thoſe who live in that delightful ſpot which Horace deſcribes;

Qua pinus ingens, albaque populus
Umbram hoſpitalem conſociare amant
Ramis, et obliquo laborat
Lympha fugax trepidare rivo:

Car. L. II. Od. iii. v. 9.

I am far more pleaſed with this ſhade and this ſtream, than with an impertinent wit that does not let me reſt. the charms of theſe authors never decay. they are ſo far from pleaſing leſs upon a review, that every reading diſcloſes new beauties. the peruſal of them is not a ſtudy: it rather calms and unbends our thoughts. bright and over-wrought compoſures dazzle and delude the fancy: but they have ſo fine an edge, that it is quickly blunted. I value neither what is difficult, nor uncommon, nor wonderful: the ſimple, natural, eaſy beauty hits my taſte. if the flowers we tread upon

in a meadow be as pretty as thoſe in the fineſt garden; I love them better. I do not grudge ſuch enjoyments to any one. beauty could loſe none of its worth, tho' it were common to all mankind: it would rather be the more excellent. ſcarcity is a defect, and a want in nature. the rays of the ſun are not a leſs valuable treaſure for ſhining upon all the univerſe. I love a beauty ſo natural that it ſhould not need the advantage of novelty to ſurprize me. I would have its charms ſuch as never to fade, but always to allure and delight me:

——————decies repetita placebunt.

HOR. de Ar. Poet.

Poetry is certainly an imitation of nature, and a ſort of painting. let us ſuppoſe then that Raphael were buſy about a picture; he would avoid drawing whimſical figures, unleſs he were working on groteſque. he would not uſe too bright colouring: he would be ſo far from deſiring his art ſhould be obvious to the eye, that he would do all he can to conceal it. he endeavoured to deceive the ſpectator, and to make him fancy that his picture is Chriſt himſelf transfigured upon the mount Tabor. it is truth alone that gives a value to his painting. art is defective when it overdoes: it ſhould always aim at an exact likeneſs. ſince it is delightful in one of Titian's country-pieces to ſee the goats climbing up a hanging rock; or to obſerve a country-feaſt and

ruſtic dances, in one of Taiſniere's pictures; it is no wonder that we are pleaſed with ſuch natural deſcriptions of human life, as we find in the Odyſſey. we fancy ourſelves to be in thoſe places that Homer deſcribes; and that we ſee and hear people there. this ſimplicity of manners ſeems to bring back the golden age. I am more pleaſed with honeſt Eumeus, than with any hero of Clelia, or Cleopatra. the fooliſh prejudices of the preſent age, make us undervalue ſuch beauties. but our follies cannot leſſen the true worth of ſuch a ſimple rational life. unhappy are they who do not feel the charms of theſe verſes;

Fortunate ſenex, hic inter flumina nota,
Et fontes ſacros, frigus captabis opacum:
VIRG. Ecl. i. v. 52.

Nothing can go beyond this deſcription of a country life;

O fortunatos nimiùm ſua ſi bona nôrint
Agricolas! quibus ipſa, procul diſcordibus armis,
Fundit humo facilem victum juſtiſſima tellus.

At ſecura quies, et neſcia fallere vita,
Dives opum variarum; ac latis otia fundis,
Speluncae, vivique lacus;——
V. Georg. ii. v. 458.

every part of it pleaſes me: even this place which is ſo remote from Romantic notions;

———at frigida Tempe
Mugituſque boum, molleſque ſub arbore ſomni
Non abſunt. V. Georg. ii. v. 469.----

In the ſame manner am I delighted with Horace's ſolitude:

O rus, quando ego te aſpiciam? quandoque licebit,
Nunc veterum libris, nunc ſomno et inertibus horis
Ducere ſollicitae jucunda oblivia vitae?
Satyr. L. II. S. vi. 60.----

The antients did not think it enough to copy nature exactly: their pictures were moving, as well as true.

Homer never paints a youth going to fall in battle, without giving him ſome affecting charms. he repreſents him full of valour, and virtue: he raiſes your love and concern for him: he makes you dread the danger that threatens him. he ſhews you his father oppreſſed with age, and alarmed at the danger of his dear ſon. he ſhews you his new married ſpouſe trembling for him; and you tremble with her: the poet enſnares your paſſions. his deſign in affecting you with ſo much beauty and ſweetneſs is only to prepare you for the fatal moment wherein you ſuddenly ſee the man you

love so much, weltering in his blood, and his eyes closed in an eternal night.

Virgil took as much care to raise our concern for Pallas, Evander's son, as Homer did to make us lament Patroclus. we are pleased with the grief we feel for Nisus, and Euryalus. I have seen a young prince, but eight years old, struck with sorrow at the sight of little † Joash's danger; and vext at the high-priest's concealing his name, and royal birth from him. I have seen him weep bitterly at hearing these verses;

Ah miseram Eurydicen, animâ fugiente vocabat:
Eurydicen toto referebant flumine ripae.
VIRG. Georg. iv. v. 526.

Was ever any thing more happily contrived, or fitter to raise a lively sentiment than this dream of Aeneas?

Tempus erat, quo prima quies mortalibus aegris
Incipit, et dono Divûm gratissima serpit.
In somnis, ecce, ante oculos moestissimus Hector
Visus adesse mihi,——
Raptatus bigis, ut quondam, aterque cruento
Pulvere, perque pedes trajectus lora tumentes.
Hei mihi, qualis erat! quantum mutatus ab illo
Hectore, qui redit exuvias indutus Achillei.
Virg. Aen. ii. v. 268.

† 2 Kings xi. 2.

Ille nihil: nec me quaerentem vana moratur:
Heu fuge, nate Dea, teque his, ait, eripe flammis:
Hoſtis habet muros: ruit alto a culmine Troja.
Sat patriae, Priamoque datum-----
Sacra ſuoſque tibi commendat Troja penates:
Hos cape fatorum comites-----

Ib. v. 287.

Could wit move the heart in this manner? can one read the following paſſage without being touched?

O mihi ſola mei ſuper Aſtyanactis imago!
Sic oculos, ſic ille manus, ſic ora ferebat;
Et nunc aequali tecum pubeſceret aevo.

Virg. Aen. L. iii. v. 489.

Turns of wit would be very unſeaſonable, and even ſhocking, in ſuch a tender paſſage: where grief alone could be allowed to ſpeak.

The poet never mentions the death of any perſon without deſcribing ſome peculiar circumſtance that muſt affect the reader. we are grieved for diſtreſſed virtue, when we read this paſſage;

-----cadit et Ripheus, juſtiſſimus unus
Qui fuit in Teucris, et ſervantiſſimus aequi.
Dis aliter viſum-----

Aen. L. ii. v. 426.

We fancy ourſelves in the midſt of Troy ſeized with horror and compaſſion when we read theſe lines:

Tum pavidae tectis matres ingentibus errant,
Amplexaeque tenent poſtes, atque oſcula figunt:

Vidi Hecubam, centumque nurus, Priamumque per aras
Sanguine foedantem, quos ipſe ſacraverat, ignes.

Arma diu ſenior deſueta trementibus aevo
Circumdat nequicquam humeris, et inutile ferrum
Cingitur, ac denſos fertur moriturus in hoſtes.

Sic fatus ſenior: telumque imbelle ſine ictu
Conjecit----- Aen. L. ii. v. 489, 501, 509, 544.

Nunc morere. haec dicens, altaria ad ipſa trementem
Traxit, et in multo lapſantem ſanguine nati:
Implicuitque comam laevâ, dextraque coruſcum
Extulit, ac lateri capulo tenus abdidit enſem.
Haec finis Priami fatorum: hic exitus illum
Sorte tulit, Trojam incenſam, et prolapſa videntem
Pergama; tot quondam populis terriſque ſuperbum
Regnatorem Aſiae: jacet ingens littore truncus
Avulſumque humeris caput, et ſine nomine corpus.
At me tum primum ſaevus circum ſtetit horror:
Obſtupui——
Reſpicio, et quae ſit me circum copia luſtro.

Deſeruere omnes defeſſi, et corpora ſaltu
Ad terram miſere, aut ignibus aegra dedere.
Virg. Aen. L. ii. v. 550, 564.

The poet does not repreſent Euridice's misfortune, without ſhewing her juſt ready once more to view the light; and in a moment plunged again into the infernal gloomy ſhades.

Jamque pedum referens, caſus evaſerat omnes;
Redditaque Euridice ſuperas veniebat ad auras;

Illa, quis et me, inquit, miſeram, et te perdidit Orpheu?
Quis tantus furor? en iterum crudelia retro
Fata vocant, conditque natantia lumina ſomnus.
Jamque vale. feror ingenti circumdata nocte,
Invalidaſque tibi tendens, heu! non tua, palmas.
Georg. L. iv. v. 485, 6, 494.

We ſympathize even with thoſe wretched cattle that the poet ſets before our eyes:

Propter aquae rivum viridi procumbit in ulva
Perdita, nec ſerae meminit decedere nocti:
Ecl. viii. v. 87.

The peſtilence raging among them makes a very moving picture:

Hinc laetis vituli vulgo moriuntur in herbis;
Et dulces animas plena ac praeſepia reddunt.

Labitur infelix ſtudiorum, atque immemor herbae
Victor equus; fonteſque avertitur, et pede terram
Crebra ferit——

Ecce autem duro fumans ſub vomere taurus
Concidit, et mixtum ſpumis vomit ore cruorem,
Extremoſque ciet gemitus: it triſtis arator
Moerentem abjungens fraterna morte juvencum;
Atque opere in medio defixa relinquit aratra.
Non umbrae altorum nemorum, non mollia poſſunt
Prata movere animum; non qui per ſaxa volutus
Purior electro campum petit amnis: at ima
Solvuntur latera: atque oculos ſtupor urget inertes:
Ad terramque fluit devexo pondere cervix.

Georg. L. iii. v. 494, 498, 515.

This poet gives life and paſſion to every object. in his verſes every thing thinks, and feels: the very trees move you.

Exiit ad coelum ramis felicibus arbos,
Miraturque novas frondes, et non ſua poma.

Georg. L. ii. v. 81, 2.

A flower raiſes your pity when Virgil paints it juſt drooping.

Purpureus veluti cum flos ſuccisus aratro
Langueſcit moriens. Aen. L. ix. v. 435.

You think that you ſee the ſmalleſt plants that the ſpring revives, and adorns:

Inque novos ſoles audent ſe gramina tutò
Credere———

Geor. L. ii. v. 332.

A nightingale is Philomela moving your compaſſion for her misfortunes;

Qualis populeâ moerens philomela ſub umbrâ
Amiſſos queritur foetus, quos durus arator
Obſervans nido implumes detraxit: at illa
Flet noctem, ramoque ſedens miſerabile carmen
Integrat, et moeſtis late loca queſtibus implet.

Geor. L. iv. v. 511.

Horace in three verſes draws a picture in which every thing is lively and affecting.

———fugit retro
Levis juventas et decor, aridâ
Pallente laſcivos amores
Canitie, facilemque ſomnum.

Carm. Lib. ii. Od. xi. v. 5.

Would he with two ſtrokes of his pencil draw two men whom every-body muſt know at firſt ſight? he ſets before your eyes the incorrigible folly of Paris, and the implacable rage of Achilles.

Quid Paris? ut ſalvus regnet, vivatque beatus,
Cogi poſſe negat------

Ep. L. i. Ep. ii. v. 10.

Impiger, iracundus, inexorabilis, acer;
Jura neget ſibi nata, nihil non arroget armis.

De Ar. Poet. v. 121.

Would he make us in love with the place where he wiſhed to end his days with his friend? he makes us long to go thither.

Ille terrarum mihi praeter omnes
Angulus ridet——----
ibi tu calentem
Debita ſparges lachrymâ favillam
Vatis amici.

Carm. Lib. ii. Od. vi.

Does he give us the character of Ulyſſes? he repreſents him as above the reach of ſtorms, and ſhipwrack, and the greateſt calamities.

——————————————aſpera multa
Pertulit, adverſis rerum immerſabilis undis.
Ep. L. i. Ep. ii. v. 21.

Does he deſcribe Rome invincible, even under her misfortunes? hear him:

Duris ut ilex tonſa bipennibus
Nigrae feraci frondis in Algido,
Per damna, per caedes, ab ipſo
Ducit opes animumque ferro.
Non Hydra ſecto corpore firmior, &c.
Carm. Lib. iv. Od. iv. 57.

Catullus (whom one cannot name without deteſting his obſcene verſes,) hit the perfection of a tender ſimplicity.

Odi, et amo: quare id faciam fortaſſe requiris.
Neſcio; ſed fieri ſentio, et excrucior.
Epigr. 86.

How much are the elaborate witty conceits of Ovid and Martial inferior to theſe negligent words; where the diſtracted heart alone ſpeaks in a kind of deſpair?

What can be more ſimple, and more moving than King Priam's being reduced in his old age to kiſs the

murdering hands of Achilles † who had deſtroyed his children. he begs of him the great Hector's body, as the only alleviation of his miſery. he muſt have ſpoiled all if he had given the leaſt ornament to his words: therefore they expreſs nothing but his grief. he conjured him by his own father who ſunk under old-age, to have pity upon the moſt wretched of all fathers.

Wit has the misfortune to weaken thoſe ſtrong paſſions it pretends to adorn. according to Horace, a poem is not to be valued much for being bright and fine, unleſs it be likewiſe moving, delightful, and conſequently, ſimple, natural, and full of paſſion:

Non ſatis eſt pulchra eſſe poemata, dulcia ſunto,
Et quocunque volent animum auditoris agunto.
De Ar. Poet. v. 99.

That which is only beautiful, I mean, bright, has but half the beauty it ought to have. ‡ true beauty muſt expreſs the paſſions well in order to excite them:

† Iliad. lib. xxiv.

‡ *Even in the arts which are merely imitations of outward grace and beauty, we not only confeſs a taſte; but make it a part of refined breeding to diſcover, amidſt the many falſe manners, and ill ſtiles, the true and natural one, which repreſents the real beauty and Venus of the kind. it is the like moral grace and Venus which diſcovering itſelf in the turns of character, and the variety of human affections, is copied by the writing artiſt. if he knows not this Venus, theſe graces, nor was ever ſtruck with the*

it ſhould captivate the mind, and keeps its attention ſteddily fixt on the true † deſign of a poem.

§. VI. With regard to dramatic poetry, we muſt firſt diſtinguiſh between tragedy, and comedy. the former exhibits ſuch great events as are apt to excite violent paſſions. the latter only deſcribes the manners of men in a private condition.

As for Tragedy, I muſt begin with declaring that

beauty, the decorum of this inward kind, he can never paint advantageouſly after the life; nor in a feigned ſubject, where he has full ſcope.

Characteriſticks, vol. i. p. 336, 7.

† *Let poets or the men of harmony, deny, if they can, this force of nature, or withſtand this moral magic. they for their parts, carry a double portion of this charm about with them: for, in the firſt place, the very paſſion that inſpires them is itſelf the love of numbers, decency, and proportion; and this too, not in a narrow ſenſe, or after a ſelfiſh way, (for who is there that compoſes for himſelf?) but in a friendly ſocial view; for the pleaſure and good of others; even down to poſterity, and future ages. in the next place, it is evident in theſe performers, that their chief theme and ſubject, that which raiſes their genius the moſt, and by which they ſo effectually move others, is purely manners, and the moral part. for this is the effect, and this the beauty of their art, in vocal meaſures of ſyllables, and ſounds, to expreſs the harmony and numbers of an inward kind; and repreſent the beauties of a human ſoul by proper foils and contrarieties, which ſerve as graces in this limning, and render this muſic of the paſſions more powerful and enchanting.*

Charact. vol. i. p. 136. 7.

I wish our poets may never aim at improving any ſcene that repreſents ſuch criminal paſſions as tend to inflame the ſpectators. I obſerved before that Plato and other wiſe legiſlators among the Heathen excluded from their well-regulated ſocieties all ſuch fables and muſical inſtruments as might unman the people by inclining them to ſenſuality. how much ſeverity then ought Chriſtian nations to ſhow againſt all contagious ſpectacles? ſo far am I from deſiring to have ſuch entertainments improved, that it gives me a ſenſible pleaſure to obſerve that among us they are very low and imperfect. our poets have made them as luſcious and inſipid as Romances. the lover talks of nothing but flames, chains, and torments: he is for dying in perfect health. a very homely lady is called a Sun, or an Aurora at leaſt: her eyes are two ſtars. every expreſſion is extravagant; and there is nothing that diſcovers a natural paſſion. it is ſo much the better: the weakneſs of the poiſon leſſens the danger. but, methinks, that according to the philoſophical notions of antiquity, there might be a wonderful force given to tragedy, without any mixture of that fickle extravagant love which produces ſo many pernicious effects.

Among the Greeks, tragedy did not in the leaſt depend on wanton love. the Oedipus of Sophocles, for inſtance, has not the leaſt touch of that paſſion, which was quite foreign to his ſubject. the other tragedies of that great poet are compoſed in the ſame manner.

M. Corneille in his Oedipus, has only weakened his action, made it double, and divided the ſpectator's attention, by the Epiſode of Theſeus's inſipid paſſion for Dirce. M. Racine fell into the ſame inconvenience in his Phaedra. he has made a double action, by joining to the diſtracted Phaedra, Hippolitus ſighing, contrary to his true character. he ſhould have ſhown Phaedra quite alone in her rage. the action would then have been ſingle, ſhort, lively and vehement. but our two tragic poets, who in other reſpects deſerve the higheſt praiſes, were carried away with the ſtream; and fell in with the Romantic taſte that prevailed. the wit then in faſhion introduced love in every piece. they thought it impoſſible to entertain an audience agreeably for two hours without the help of ſome amorous intrigue. people thought it modiſh to be impatient at the nobleſt and moſt affecting ſcenes, unleſs ſome whining hero came in to interrupt it. his very ſighs muſt be ſet off with quibbles; and his deſpair be expreſt in a kind of epigram. ſo far doth the deſire of pleaſing the vulgar taſte conſtrain our greateſt poets to tranſgreſs the rules of decorum. hence came this fantaſtic ſort of paſſion:

† Thou cruel thirſt of fame whoſe noble rage
Drives me to death, to give my mem'ry life;

† Impitoyable ſoif de gloire,
Dont l'aveugle et noble tranſport
Me fait precipiter ma mort,
Pour faire vivre ma memoire:

Stop but a moment thy impetuous courſe;
And let me ſtill, before I breathe my laſt
This wretched day, give one more ſigh to love.

the hero dared not die of grief without a quibble or turn of wit at expiring.

Hence too comes this ſwelling florid deſpair:

† A fatal and an unexpected blow
Has ſtruck me to the bottom of the heart:
Wretched avenger of a too juſt quarrel!
And wretched object of unjuſt revenge.

never did real grief ſpeak in ſuch a pompous affected ſtrain.

I think it would be proper to rid tragedy of that ſenſeleſs fuſtian, which has not the leaſt air of probability. for example the following lines have ſomething in them very extravagant:

Arrete pour quelques momens
Les impetueux ſentimens
De cette inexorable envie;
Et ſouffre qu'en ce triſte jour
Avant que de donner ma vie
Je donne un ſoupir à l'amour. RACINE.

† Percé juſques au fond du coeur
D'une atteinte imprevûë auſſi-bien que mortelle;
Miſerable vangeur d'une juſte querelle!
Et malheureux objet d'une injuſte rigueur.

† Impatient wiſhes of a brave revenge,
Who owe your being to a father's death;
Impetuous children of my juſt reſentment
Blindly embrac'd by my miſguided grief,
Ye rule my ſoul with a too abſolute ſway,
Let me at leaſt enjoy one moment's eaſe
In this my anxious ſtate, that I may weigh
Both what I hazard, and what I purſue.

M. Boileau obſerved in theſe verſes a genealogy of impatient wiſhes of a brave revenge; which were the impetuous children of a juſt reſentment; and were embraced by a miſguided grief. the chief perſons in a tragedy who ſpeak with paſſion, ought to expreſs it in a noble lively manner: but the paſſions always ſpeak naturally, and without ſuch affected turns. people in affliction would not deſire to be condoled by their friends, in ſuch pompous affected language.

M. Racine was not free from this defect which cuſtom had made almoſt neceſſary. nothing can be leſs

† Impatiens deſirs d'une illuſtre vengeance,
A qui la mort d'une pere a donné la naiſſance;
Enfans impetueux de mon reſſentiment,
Que ma douleur séduite embraſſe aveuglement;
Vous regnez ſur mon ame avec trop d'empire,
Pour les moins ſouffrez un moment que je reſpire,
Et que je conſidere en l'etat ou je ſuis
Et ce que je hazarde, et ce que je pourſuis.

CORNEILLE.

natural than the account of Hippolitus's death at the end of the tragedy of Phaedra; which otherwiſe has great beauties in it. Theramenes who comes to acquaint Theſeus of his ſon's fatal death, ſhould only have told it in two words; and hardly have had ſtrength to pronounce them diſtinctly. he ſhould have ſaid, 'Hippolitus is dead------a monſter, which the angry 'gods ſent from the bottom of the ſea, devoured him '-----I ſaw it.' could a man ſo concerned, frightened, breathleſs, amuſe himſelf in making a pompous florid deſcription of the ſea-monſter?

† His melancholy look, and drooping head
Seem'd to expreſs his ſad, dejected thoughts:

It mov'd the earth, infected all the air;
The wave that brought it ſtarted back with dread.

Sophocles was far from this miſplaced elegance, that has not the leaſt ſhew of probability in it. he makes Oedipus utter broken words that expreſs nothing but ſorrow: ἰὼ, ἰὼ; αἰ, αἰ; φεῦ, φεῦ. O! O! ah! ah! alas! alas! this cannot be called ſpeaking, but rather groan-

† L'oeil morne maintenant, et la tête baiſsée
Sembloient ſe conformer à ſa triſte penſée
La terre s'en émeut, l'air en eſt infecté;
Le flot qui l'apporta, recule épouvanté.

RACINE.

ing, or crying. † 'alas alas (fays he) the truth now 'appears too plainly. O light, this is the laft time I 'fhall behold thee-------alas! alas! wretched man! 'where am I? whence comes it that my voice fo fud-'denly fails me? O fortune, whither art thou fled?---- 'unhappy, wretched man that I am! I feel a raging 'anguifh whilft I think of my misfortunes----O friends, 'what can I now fee, or love, or entertain, or hear

† Ἰὺ, ἰὺ· τὰ πάντ' ἂν ἐξίκοι σαφῆ.
Ὦ φῶς, τελευταῖόν σε προσβλέψαιμι νῦν.

Αἲ αἲ αἲ.
Φεῦ, φεῦ, δύσταν ἐγώ· ποῖ γᾶς
Φέρομαι τλάμων; πᾶ μοὶ φθογξᾶ
Διαπέταλαι φοράδην;
Ὦ δαίμον, ἴν' ἐξήλυ;

----------οἵ μοι,
Οἵ μοι μάλ' αὖθις· οἷον εἰσέδυ μ' ἄμα
Κέντρων τε τῶνδ' οἴτρημα, χ' μνήμη κακῶν.----
Τί δῆτοτ' ἐμοὶ βλεπτὸν ἦ
Στερκτὸν ἢ προσήγορον
Ετ' ἐς' ἀκούειν ἡδονᾷ, φίλοι;
Απάγετ' ἐκτόπιον ὅτι τάχιστά με,
Απάγετ' ὦ φίλοι, τὸν ὄλεθρον μέγαν,
Τὸν καταρατότατον, ἔτι δέ γε χ'
Θεοῖς ἐχθρότατον βροτῶν.------

'with comfort? O friends, immediately forſake a 'wretch, an execrable wretch, abhorred of gods and 'men-----curſed be the man that unlooſed my fetters, 'and ſaved my life, in the deſart where I was expo- 'ſed. he did me no real kindneſs. I might then have 'dyed with leſs ſorrow both to myſelf, and to my 'friends-----I ſhould neither have become my father's 'murderer, nor my mother's husband. now I am re- 'duced to the greateſt miſery. I have polluted my 'own parents! I have had children by her that brought 'me into the world!'

Thus it is that nature ſpeaks, when oppreſt with grief: nothing can be more remote from the ſparkling expreſſions of a wit. Sophocles likewiſe makes Hercules and Philoctetes expreſs their ſorrow in the ſame lively artleſs manner.

Ολοιθ' ὅσις ἦν ὃς ἀγρίας πέδας
Επιποδίας μ' ἀπό τε φόνω
Ερρυσο κἀνέσωσεν, ὐδὲν εἰς χάριν
Πράσσων· τότε γὰ ἂν θανὼν
Οὐκ ἦν φίλοισιν ὐδ' ἐμοὶ τοσόνδ' ἄχος.

Οὔκουν πατρός γ' ἂν φονεὺς
Ηλθον, ὐδὲ νυμφίος
Βροτοῖς ἐκλήθην ὧν ἔφυν ἄπο.
Νῦν δ' ἄθλιος μέν εἰμ', ἀνοσίων δὲ παις,
Ομογενὴς δ' ἀφ' ὧν αὐτός γ' ἔφυν τάλας.

Sophoc. Oedip.

M. Racine, who had carefully ſtudied the great models of antiquity, had formed the plan of a French tragedy of Oedipus according to the manner of Sophocles, and the true Greek ſimplicity, without mixing any impertinent intrigue of love in it. ſuch a piece might have been very curious, lively, vehement, and affecting. it would not indeed be applauded; but it would move an audience, and make them weep: it would keep them continually attentive: it would inſpire them with the love of virtue, and a deteſtation of vice: it would ſerve to promote the obſervance of the beſt laws. perſons of the ſtricteſt piety could not be offended at it. nothing need be retrenched from it but thoſe falſe ornaments that are contrary to all rules.

Our rigorous rules of verſification often oblige the beſt tragic poets to fill their verſes with uſeleſs epithets, for the ſake of rhyme. nay to one good line, they ſometimes add another ſilly one that ſpoils it. for inſtance, I am charmed when I read theſe words in Corneille's Horatii

——————he might dy:

but I cannot bear the next line that is brought only for the rhyme;

Or gain, through brave deſpair, the victory.

The exceſſive circumlocutions in our verſes have nothing in them that is natural. they do not repreſent men talking together in a ſerious, noble, vehement manner. the ſpectator loſes the greateſt pleaſure of the entertainment, when it has not this air of probability. I confeſs the antients allowed of a † lofty ſtile in tragedy;

An tragica deſaevit, et ampullatur in arte.

Hor. Ep.

but ſtill it ought to be a true imitation of nature. it may be allowed to paint in a noble, beautiful manner; but on all occaſions men ought to ſpeak in an eaſy na-

† *Now according to this natural growth of arts, peculiar to Greece, it would neceſſarily happen, that at the beginning when the force of language came to be firſt proved; when the admiring world made their firſt judgment, and eſſayed their taſte in the elegancies of this ſort; the lofty, the ſublime, the aſtoniſhing and amazing would be the moſt in faſhion, and preferred. metaphorical ſpeech, multiplicity of figures, and high ſounding words would naturally prevail----but the taſte of Greece was now poliſhing. a better judgment was ſoon formed, when a Demoſthenes was heard, and had found ſucceſs. the people themſelves----came now to reform their comedy and familiar manner, after tragedy and the higher ſtile had been brought to its perfection under the laſt hand of an Euripides. and now in all the principal works of ingenuity and art, ſimplicity and nature began chiefly to be ſought: and this was the taſte which laſted through ſo many ages, till the ruin of all things under an univerſal monarchy.*

Charact. vol. iii. p. 140, 141.

tural way. a hero muſt appear moſt ridiculous, if in the greateſt actions of his life, he does not ſpeak not only with a noble force, but ſuch an eaſy ſimplicity as is directly oppoſite to bombaſt:

Projecit ampullas et ſeſquipedalia verba.
Hor. de Ar. Poet. v. 97.

it is enough that the poet makes Agamemnon talk haughtily; Achilles, in anger; Ulyſſes, with wiſdom; and Medea, in fury. but the pompous extravagant way of ranting ſpoils every thing. the greater thoſe characters are, and the ſtronger thoſe paſſions which the poet repreſents, the more neceſſary it is, to draw them with a † noble and vehement ſimplicity.

† *In poetry and ſtudied proſe, the aſtoniſhing part, or what commonly paſſes for ſublime, is formed by the variety of figures, the multiplicity of metaphors, and by quitting as much as poſſible the natural and eaſy way of expreſſion, for that which is moſt unlike to humanity, or ordinary uſe. this the prince of critics aſſures us to have been the manner of the earlieſt poets before the age of Homer; or till ſuch time as this father-poet came into repute; who depoſed that ſpurious race, and gave riſe to a legitimate and genuine kind. he retained only what was decent of the figurative or metaphoric ſtile, introduced the natural, and ſimple, and turned his thoughts toward the real beauty of compoſition the unity of deſign, the truth of characters, and the juſt imitation of nature in each particular.*

Charact. vol. i. p. 242, 3.

Methinks our poets have made the Romans talk in a too lofty ſtrain. for, tho' they thought nobly; they talked with moderation. they were indeed a kingly people;

--------populum late regem
Virg. Aen. L. i. v. 25.

but ſtill they were as mild in their intercourſe and expreſſions, as they were vigorous in conquering thoſe nations that were jealous of their power:

Parcere ſubjectis, et debellare ſuperbos.
Aen. L. vi. v. 853.

Horace has given the ſame character of them in other words:

Imperet bellante prior, jacentem
Lenis in hoſtem.
Carm. Secul. v. 51, 2.

The ſtatelineſs with which Auguſtus is made to ſpeak in the tragedy of Cinna, is ſcarce conſiſtent with that modeſt ſimplicity which Sueton aſcribes to him, in all the particulars of his conduct. he ſtill preſerved in Rome ſo great an appearance of the antient liberty of the republic, that he would not ſuffer the people to

call him Lord. ‡ 'both by his aſpect, and his geſ-
'ture, (ſays Sueton) he diſcouraged the unmanly flat-
'teries that were addreſſed to him; and the next day
'he ſuppreſſed them by a moſt ſevere edict. nor would
'he ever afterwards ſuffer himſelf to be called Lord,
'not even by his children, and his other relations, ei-
'ther in jeſt, or in earneſt----during his conſulſhip he
'generally walked abroad; and at other times he was
'often carried in a cloſe chair. he allowed the com-
'mon people as well as others to converſe with him----

‡ Manu, vultuque indecoras adulationes repreſſit, et in ſequenti die graviſſimo corripuit edicto; dominumque ſe poſthac appellari ne a liberis, aut nepotibus, vel ſerio, vel joco paſſus eſt----in conſulatu pedibus fere, extra conſulatum ſaepe adoperta ſella per publicum inceſſit. promiſcuis ſalutationibus admittebat et plebem-----quoties magiſtratuum comitiis intereſſet, tribus cum candidatis ſuis circumibat, ſupplicabatque more ſolemni. ferebat et ipſe ſuffragium in tribu, ut unus e populo--filiam et neptes ita inſtituit, ut etiam lanificio aſſuefaceret---habitavit in aedibus modicis Hortenſianis neque laxitate, neque cultu conſpicuis; ut in quibus porticus breves eſſent;——et ſine marmore ullo, aut inſigni pavimento conſpicuae: ac per annos amplius xl. eodem cubiculo hieme et aeſtate manſit --- -inſtrumenti ejus et ſupellectilis parſimonia apparet etiam nunc reſiduis lectis atque menſis, quorum pleraque vix privatae elegantiae ſint---coenam tribus ferculis, aut cum abundantiſſime, ſenis praebebat; ut non nimio ſumptu, ita ſumma comitate----veſte non temere alia quam domeſtica uſus eſt ab uxore confecta---- ---cibi minimi erat atque vulgaris fere----

Suet. Vita Aug.

'when he aſſiſted at the election of magiſtrates, he went 'round the tribes with his candidates; and ſollicited 'for them in the uſual form: and he himſelf voted in 'his tribe as one of the people-----he ſo educated his 'daughter and grand-daughters, that they were accu-'ſtomed even to ſpinning of wool---he dwelt in the 'ordinary Hortenſian buildings, which are not con-'ſpicuous either for ſpaciouſneſs, or ornament: the 'portico's being but ſhort----and not adorned with 'marble or coſtly pavement. he lodged in the ſame 'chamber both in ſummer and winter, for upwards of 'forty years----the plainneſs of his furniture appears 'from ſome of his beds and tables, ſtill remaining; 'moſt of which are ſcarce commonly handſome----- 'he ſupped on three diſhes, or (on extraordinary oc-'caſions) upon ſix at moſt: and then his entertainments 'were not ſumptuous, but always frank----he ſeldom 'wore any other cloaths than were manufactured by 'his wife-------his diet was ſparing; and generally 'plain——

Pomp and bombaſt are more ſuitable to the pride of a Perſian monarch than to the civility that was peculiar to the Romans. notwithſtanding the ſeverity of Tiberius, and the ſervile flattery into which they fell in his days, and under his ſucceſſors; Pliny tells us that Trajan lived ſtill like a good ſociable citizen, with an amiable familiarity. this emperor's anſwers are ſhort, exact, and void of all pomp. the baſſo relievo of

his antient pillar at Rome repreſents him always in the moſt modeſt poſture; even when he is at the head of his legions. every thing we read in Livy, Plutarch, Tully, or Sueton, repreſent the Romans as a people that were haughty in their ſentiments; but very plain, natural and modeſt in their language. they did not in the leaſt reſemble the ſtiff bluſtering heroes in our romances. a great man does not declaim like an actor. in converſation he ſpeaks in ſtrong and proper terms: he ſays nothing that is mean; nor any thing that is pompous and affected:

Ne quicunque Deus, quicunque adhibebitur Heros,
Regali conſpectus in auro nuper et oſtro,
Migret in obſcuras humili ſermone tabernas;
Aut, dum vitat humum, nubes et inania captet.
Hor. de Ar. Poet. v. 227.

The nobleneſs of the tragic ſtile ſhould not hinder even heroes from ſpeaking with ſimplicity, according to the nature of the things they talk of.

Et tragicus plerumque dolet ſermone pedeſtri.

§. VII. Comedy is inferior to tragedy; and deſcribes the manners of men in a private condition: therefore it requires a more familiar ſtrain. but ſome men ſhow a haughty temper in the loweſt circumſtances, as well as in the higheſt.

Iratuſque Chremes tumido delitigat ore.

Hor. de Ar. Poet. v. 94.

I confeſs that I think the ſtrokes of pleaſantry in Ariſtophanes are very low; and reſemble the modern Farce, which is purpoſely deſigned to amuſe and gratify the mob. what can be more ridiculous than his deſcription of a Perſian king travelling with forty thouſand men, to a golden mountain, merely to ſatisfy the infirmities of nature?

There is a great reſpect due to antiquity: but the antients themſelves allow us to judge freely of their works. Horace teaches me how to judge of Plautus:

At noſtri proavi Plautinos et numeros, et
Laudavere ſales; nimium patienter utrumque,
Ne dicam ſtulte, mirati: ſi modo ego, et vos:
Scimus inurbanum lepido ſeponere dicto.

Hor. de Ar. Poet. v. 270.

Could it be the low humour of Plautus that Caeſar meant by the Vis Comica that he wiſhed Terence to have had? Menander had given this latter poet a juſt and delicate taſte. Scipio and Laelius, Terence's friends, nicely diſtinguiſhed in his favour, between that humour which Horace calls Lepidum: and what is Inurbanum. that comic poet has an inimitable ſimplicity that charms and moves us by the bare recital of a very common incident.

Sic cogitabam; hic parvae consuetudinis
Causa, mortem hujus tam fert familiariter:
Quid si amasset? quid mihi hic faciet patri?----
Effertur. imus, &c.

Ter. Andr. Act. i. Sc. 1,

Nothing can be more exactly managed; so as not to overdo any character. what follows is tender:

----------at at, hoc illud est,
Hinc illae lachrymae; haec illa est misericordia.

Ibid,

Here is another passage in which passion alone speaks:

Memor essem? ô Mysis, Mysis, etiam nunc mihi
Scripta illa dicta sunt in animo Chrysidis
De Glycerio. jam ferme moriens me vocat;
Accessi: vos semotae: nos soli: incipit:
Mi Pamphile, hujus formam atque aetatem vides;
Quod ego te per hanc dextram oro, et ingenium tuum,
Per tuam fidem, perque hujus solitudinem
Te obtestor———
Te isti virum do, amicum, tutorem, patrem:
Hanc mi in manum dat: mors continuò ipsam occupat.
Accepi, acceptam servabo———

Whatever wit could add to these simple moving ex-

preſſions could only weaken them. but here are ſome others that riſe into real tranſport.

Neque Virgo eſt uſquam, neque ego, qui illam e conſpectu amiſi meo.
Ubi quaeram? ubi inveſtigem? quem perconter? quam inſiſtam viam?
Incertus ſum: una haec ſpes eſt: ubi, ubi eſt dia celari non poteſt. TER. Eun. Act. ii. Sc. 3.

Paſſion ſpeaks here again in the ſame lively manner:

----------ego ne quid velim?
Cum milite iſto praeſens, abſens ut ſies----
Ibid. Act. I. Sc. 2.

Can one wiſh for more ſimple or more lively ſcenes?

It muſt be owned that Moliere is a great comic poet. I will even venture to ſay that he has entered farther into ſome particular characters than Terence; and has handled a greater variety of ſubjects. with very maſterly touches he has drawn and expoſed almoſt every thing that is diſorderly, and ridiculous. Terence only deſcribes covetous and ſuſpicious fathers; lavish profligate youths; impudent greedy courtiſans; mean, fawning paraſites; and cheating wicked ſlaves. no doubt theſe characters deſerved to be handled agreeably to the manners of the Greeks and Romans. beſides, we

have but ſix plays of this great author. but Moliere has opened an unbeaten track. I own again, that he is a fine writer. but may I not ſpeak of his faults with freedom? he oft-times expreſſes a good thought very ill. he uſes ſtrained and unnatural expreſſions. Terence with the moſt elegant ſimplicity, ſays in four words, what our poet expreſſes in a variety of metaphors that are little better than fuſtian. I like his proſe much better than his poetry. for inſtance, the Miſer has fewer faults than his plays that are in verſe. it is true the French verſification cramped his thoughts. we find likewiſe that he has ſucceeded better in the poetry of his Amphitryon, where he took the liberty to make irregular verſes, than in his other plays. but in general he does not ſeem to me, even in his proſe, to ſpeak with ſimplicity enough to expreſs all the paſſions. beſides, he has ſtrained ſome characters. by this freedom he deſigned to pleaſe the pit; to hit the taſte of the meaneſt ſpectators; and to render the ridicule of ſuch characters the more ſenſible. but tho' a poet ought to deſcribe the higheſt degree of every paſſion, by its moſt diſtinguiſhing marks, the better to ſhew its deformity and extravagance; yet there is no occaſion to conſtrain nature, and to go beyond all probability. thus, notwithſtanding the example of Plautus, who ſays, Cedo Tertiam; I aſſert againſt Moliere, that a miſer in his right wits will never deſire to look into the third hand of a man he ſuſpects of having robbed him.

Another fault of Moliere (which ſome witty people forgive, tho' I cannot pardon it,) is that he has given vice an agreeable turn; and a ſhocking ridiculous auſterity to virtue. I know his admirers will pretend that he has done juſtice and honour to true probity; and only expoſed moroſe virtue and a deteſtable hypocriſy. but without entering into a long diſpute on this point, I maintain that Plato and the other antient legiſlators would never have ſuffered ſuch jeſting upon virtuous characters, in their republics.

In fine, I cannot help thinking with M. Boileau, that Moliere who deſcribes the manners of his country with ſo much beauty and force, falls too low when he imitates the low humour of the Italian comedies.

† In Scapin's Sack I loſe the Miſanthrope.

§. VIII. It were to be wiſhed, methinks, for the honour of the Academy, that they would procure us a treatiſe on hiſtory. there are but few hiſtorians free from groſs faults, and yet hiſtory is of great ‡ importance. it points out great examples to us: it makes the

† Dans ce Sac ridicule, ou Scapin s'enveloppe,
Je ne reconnois plus l'Auteur du Miſanthrope.
Boil. Art Poetique. Chant. iii.

‡ Hiſtoria vero teſtis temporum, lux veritatis, vita memoriae, magiſtra vitae, nuncia vetuſtatis——
Cic. de Orat. lib. ii. §. 9.

vices of bad men ſerve for inſtruction to the good: it diſentangles the origin of nations; and ſhews by what means people paſſed from one form of government to another.

A good hiſtorian is not† partial to any age, or nation. tho' he loves his country, he never flatters it. a French hiſtorian ſhould ſhew himſelf neutral between England, and France. he ought to praiſe Talbot, as freely as Gueſclin; and do as much juſtice to the Prince of Wales's warlike genius, as to the wiſdom of Charles the Vth. he equally avoids panegyric, and ſatyr: and deſerves credit no farther than he confines himſelf to relate both what is good, and what is bad; without flattery, or malice. he omits no incident that ſerves to deſcribe the chief perſons he ſpeaks of; and to diſcover the true cauſes of events. but he avoids all thoſe curious diſquiſitions that tend only to diſplay the author's knowledge. he ſhews his critical skill only in relating thoſe facts as doubtful, which really are ſo; and in leaving them to the reader's judgment, after giving him the beſt information he could. he who has rather a talent for learning, and criticiſm, than a genius for hiſtory, will not bate his reader the leaſt date, or any incident however dry and impertinent; not even the moſt

† Nam quis neſcit, primam eſſe hiſtoriae legem, ne quid falſi dicere audeat? deinde, ne quid veri non audeat? nequa ſuſpicio gratiae ſit in ſcribendo? nequa ſimultatis?

Cic. de Orat. lib. ii. §. 15.

uſeleſs circumſtance. he follows his own humour, without regarding the public taſte. he would have every body as fond as he is of thoſe trifles that employ his inſatiable curioſity. on the contrary, a cautious diſcreet hiſtorian drops all inſignificant facts that give the reader no light into any important point. by leaving out theſe uſeleſs incidents, you take nothing from the hiſtory: for, they only interrupt and lengthen it; and make it a collection of hiſtorical ſcraps, without any thread of lively narration. ſuch a ſcrupulous exactneſs ſhould be left to compilers; the main point is to give the reader an eaſy view of important things; to ſhew him their connection; and to lead him on ſpeedily to the unravelling of the whole. herein hiſtory ought ſomewhat to reſemble an epic poem:

Semper ad eventum feſtinat; et in medias res
Non ſecus ac notas, auditorem rapit: et quae
Deſperat tractata niteſcere poſſe, relinquit.
Hor. de Ar. Poet. v. 148.

There are many general facts that only inform us of barren dates, and of names which are not worth remembring. I am not acquainted with a man's character, merely by knowing his name. I would rather read ſuch an hiſtorian as Froiſſard who is not very exact and judicious, and miſtakes names, but gives a plain natural account of things; than thoſe hiſtorians who tell

me that Charlemagne held his parliament at Ingelheim; that then he went to fight the Saxons; and returned to Aix-la-Chapelle. this teaches me nothing that is useful. facts related without circumstances, are like a body stript of its flesh: they make only the skeleton of a history.

The chief perfection of a history consists in the order, and disposal of its parts. to attain to this beautiful order the historian must have one clear and comprehensive view of his whole subject. he should try to place it in various lights, till he find out its truest point of view. he must shew its unity; and draw, as it were from one source, all the chief events that depend upon it. by this method he instructs his readers in the most useful things; and gives them the pleasure of foreseeing the sequel of events. he engages their attention: he sets before their eyes a scheme of the most important affairs, in every period of time: he points out to them what is most likely to result from it: he makes them argue, without arguing himself: he spares them many repetitions: he never lets them grow weary. the connection he gives to various facts makes the whole narration be easily remembered. I must here again apply to history, a passage of Horace which relates to an epic poem:

Ordinis haec virtus erit, et Venus, aut ego fallor;
Ut jam nunc dicat, jam nunc debeatis dici

Pleraque differat, et praesens in tempus omittat:
Hor. de Ar. Poet. v. 42.

A dry heavy annaliſt knows no other order but that of chronology. he repeats a fact every time he has occaſion to mention any thing that depends on it. he dares neither ſet forward, nor poſtpone, any particular narration. but an hiſtorian that has a true genius, out of twenty places, chuſes that in which a fact may be moſt commodiouſly ſet, ſo as to give a light to all the reſt. oft-times a fact mentioned long before the order of time it happened in, clears up all the train of events that paved the way to it. ſometimes another incident will appear in its full light, by being poſtponed: for then it is introduced more appoſitely, as the occaſion of other events. Cicero compares this juſt order to the care that a perſon of a good taſte takes to † place fine pictures in an advantagious light. thus a judicious reader has the pleaſure of continually fore-ſeeing ſomewhat of the ſequel, without confuſion; he obſerves always one event riſing out of another; and longs to ſee the winding up of the whole; which is artfully concealed from him, to haſten him on to it with the greater impatience. when he has peruſed the whole hiſtory, he looks back like a curious traveller, who having got to the top of

† Videtur tamquam tabulas bene pictas collocare in bono lumine.
Cic. *de claris orat.* §. 75.

a mountain, obſerves all around him, and takes a delight in viewing from this ſituation, the way he came; and all the pleaſant places through which he paſſed.

A well choſen circumſtance, a ſaying well related, or a particularity of behaviour that points out a man's genius or humour, is a delicate maſterly ſtroke in hiſtory: for it paints the perſon to the life, and ſets him before your eyes. Plutarch and Sueton have done this to perfection. we obſerve the ſame with pleaſure in Cardinal D'Oſſat. when you read his hiſtory, you fancy that you ſee Clement the VIIIth ſpeaking to him ſometimes with openneſs of heart; and ſometimes with great reſerve.

An hiſtorian ought to retrench many ſuperfluous epithets, and other ſuch ornaments of diſcourſe. this will make his hiſtory more conciſe, more lively, more ſimple, and more agreeable. in his narration he ought to interweave the moſt ſolid notions of virtue, without moralizing. he ſhould avoid ſententious remarks with the utmoſt care. his hiſtory will be ſufficiently adorned, if he relate things in a juſt order, and a clear, proper, conciſe, noble ſtile. † Cicero ſays, 'there is 'nothing more agreeable in hiſtory than an eaſy noble 'conciſeneſs.' indeed it is a diſadvantage to hiſtory to be embelliſhed. nothing could be more worthy of Tully than this remark upon Caeſar's commentaries.

† Nihil eſt in hiſtoria, pura et illuſtri brevitate dulcius. *De claris orat.* §. 75.

† 'we have an excellent account of his tranſactions 'in ſome commentaries he wrote; which are naked, 'correct, and beautiful; being ſtript of all the orna-'ments of ſtile. but while he ſeemed only to furniſh 'others with materials for writing a hiſtory, perhaps 'he gratifyed ſome injudicious perſons, who might 'endeavour to embelliſh them: but he diſcouraged 'all wiſe men from writing on the ſame ſubject.' a wit deſpiſes a naked hiſtory, as imperfect: he would have it cloathed, trimmed up and adorned with embroidery. the want of theſe ornaments is what weak people reckon a fault. but a judicious perſon, who has a delicate taſte, deſpairs of being able to add any real beauty to this noble, majeſtic ſimplicity.

The moſt neceſſary, and moſt uncommon accompliſhment in an hiſtorian is to know exactly the form of government, in every age, and the ſucceſſive manners of the nation whoſe hiſtory he writes. a painter that knows not what the Italians call, Il Coſtume, can draw nothing exactly. the painters of the ſchool of Lombardy have failed in this particular; tho' in o-

† Commentarios quoſdam ſcripſit rerum ſuarum, valde quidem probandos. nudi enim ſunt, recti, et venuſti, omni ornatu orationis tamquam veſte detracta. ſed dum voluit alios habere parata unde ſumerent, qui vellent ſcribere hiſtoriam, ineptis gratum fortaſſe fecit, qui volunt illa calamiſtris inruere; ſanos quidem homines a ſcribendo deterruit.

De claris orat. §. 75.

ther reſpects they have repreſented nature to the life. they have drawn the Jewiſh high-prieſt, like a pope; and the antient Greeks, like the people of Lombardy. nothing could be more falſe, or more ſhocking than to paint the French in Henry the Second's time, with periwigs and cravats; or to draw thoſe of the preſent age with beards and ruffs. the manners of each nation are very different from other people's. and the ſame nation often changes its own cuſtoms. during the infancy of Cyrus the Perſian manners were as ſimple, as thoſe of the Medes were effeminate and luxurious. but afterwards the Perſians fell into the ſame ſoftneſs and variety. an hiſtorian would ſhew himſelf groſsly ignorant if he repreſented the table of Curius or Fabricius, like that of Apicius, or Lucullus. we ſhould laugh at an hiſtorian that ſhould ſpeak of the magnificence of Numa's court, or of the Lacedemonian kings. he ought to deſcribe the powerful and happy poverty of the antient Romans:

——————parvoque potentem.
Virg. Aen. L. vi. v. 843.

he ought not to forget how ſimple and plain the Greeks were in Alexander's time, in compariſon of the Aſiatics: as appears from † Caridemus' ſpeech to Darius. the very plain houſe in which Auguſtus lived forty

† Quint. Curt.

years, muſt not be repreſented like the golden palace that Nero built ſoon after.

Roma domus fiet: Veïos migrate Quirites,
Si non et Veïos occupat iſta domus.

Our own nation muſt not be deſcribed as if it had been always the ſame: for it has changed continually. an hiſtorian that ſhould draw Clovis amidſt a polite, genteel, magnificent court, would be little the better for relating particular facts aright; ſeeing he would be miſtaken in the chief point concerning the manners of the whole nation. the Franks were then only a wild wandring band, almoſt without laws, and order; who lived only by inroads, and rapine. the Gauls whom the Romans civilized, muſt not be confounded with the Franks. ſome rays of dawning politeneſs ſhould appear in the days of Charlemagne, and immediately vaniſh again. the ſudden fall of his family plunged Europe into a frightful ſtate of ignorance. S. Louis was a prodigy of virtue and prudence in ſuch a degenerate age. we are ſcarce got out of that tedious night. the revival of literature and arts began in Italy: and they came into France very late. an affectation of wit, and falſe delicacy hindered their progreſs.

The changes that happen in the form of a nation's government ought to be carefully obſerved by an hiſtorian. for inſtance, in France we had at firſt Salique

lands diſtinguiſhed from other eſtates, and allotted to the military part of the nation. he ought never to confound the beneficiary earldoms of Charlemagne's time, which were only perſonal offices, with the Hereditary earldoms, which, under his ſucceſſors, became ſettlements in families. he ſhould diſtinguiſh the parliaments founded by the ſecond royal line, (which were aſſemblies of the nation) from the ſeveral parliaments that the kings of the third line eſtabliſhed in the diſtinct provinces of the kingdom, for determining private law-ſuits. he ought to know the origin of fiefs; the ſervice of feudataries; the infranchiſement of bondmen; the increaſe of corporations; the erection of the † Third State; the introduction of clerks practitioners to be counſellors to the nobles, who were little acquainted with the laws; and the eſtabliſhment of troops in the king's pay, to prevent the incurſions of the Engliſh, who had ſettled themſelves in the heart of the kingdom. the manners and ſtate of the whole nation have changed in every age. without going further back, the alteration of our manners ſince Henry the IVth is incredible. it is far more important to obſerve theſe changes of a whole nation, than barely to relate particular facts.

If a judicious perſon ſet himſelf to lay down rules for writing hiſtory, he might join examples to precepts. he might give his judgment of the hiſtorians of

† Du Tiers-Etat.

all ages; and might observe that a compleat historian is perhaps more uncommon than a great poet.

Herodotus, who is called the father of history, relates things exactly well. there is a beauty in the very variety of his subjects. but his work is rather a collection of the various accounts of the different countries, than a history that has unity of parts, and a true order.

Xenophon only wrote a journal of his retreat with his ten thousand Grecians from Paphlagonia. every thing in it is distinct, and exact; but uniform. his Cyropaedia is rather a philosophical romance, (as Tully believed,) than a true history.

Polybius is well-skilled in politics, and the art of war: but he reasons too much; tho' he reasons justly. he exceeds the bounds of a mere historian. his work is a kind of political anatomy. he unfolds every event, as contained in its cause: and shews as it were by mechanical laws, that such a people must necessarily overcome another people: and that such a peace made between Rome, and Carthage, could not possibly last.

Thucydides and Titus Livius have many fine harangues: but they seem to have been composed by themselves; and not to be real speeches. one can scarce believe that they copied them from the records of that time. Livy did not understand the military affairs of his age so well as Polybius.

Sallust wrote with a peculiar beauty and nobleness:

but he enlarges too much in deſcribing the manners and characters of perſons in two very ſhort hiſtories.

Tacitus ſhews abundance of ſkill, and a thorow knowledge of the moſt corrupted hearts, but he too much affects a myſterious conciſeneſs. he is too full of poetical turns in his deſcriptions. he is too penetrating: he is too refined in his conjectures. he aſcribes that to the ſubtleſt policy, which really aroſe from miſtake, caprice, or unaccountable humour. the greateſt events often flow from the meaneſt cauſes. It was weakneſs, cuſtom, falſe ſhame, diſguſt, or the advice of a freed-man, that determined an affair: whilſt Tacitus endeavoured to find out the moſt refined policy in the emperor's councils. moſt people are moderate and ſuperficial in the purſuit of evil, as well as of good. Tiberius, one of the vileſt men that ever lived, was more influenced by his fears, than by any ſettled ſcheme of acting.

We read D'Avila with pleaſure; but he ſpeaks as if he had been admitted into the moſt ſecret councils. one man could never have been entruſted by all the contending parties. beſides, every perſon muſt have ſome ſecret that he would not communicate to the hiſtorian. one can know but a part of the truth: and he who pretends to inform me of what I ſee he could not know, inclines me to ſuſpect even thoſe facts he might know.

Such a criticiſm upon antient and modern hiſtori-

ans, would be very uſeful, and very agreeable; without offending any living author.

§. IX. Againſt what I have propoſed, it will probably be objected that the Academy will never adopt theſe ſeveral treatiſes as its own; without firſt examining them. now it is not likely that an author who has beſtowed the utmoſt pains on a work, will ſubmit it intirely to the correction of a numerous aſſembly; in which the opinions of the ſeveral members will perhaps be very different. therefore it is not to be ſuppoſed that the Academy will adopt ſuch a work.

My anſwer is ſhort. I ſuppoſe that the Academy will not adopt it; but only employ particular perſons in ſuch an undertaking. each of theſe might conſult the Academy at their aſſemblies. for example, the author of a rhetoric might propoſe to them his doubts concerning eloquence. the members will give him their thoughts on this ſubject: and their opinions may happen to be divided. but the author might make what uſe of them he ſhould judge proper, without conſtraining himſelf.

The diſputes that ſhould ariſe in theſe aſſemblies upon ſuch queſtions might be recorded in a ſort of journal, that the ſecretary ſhould compoſe without partiality. this journal would contain ſhort diſſertations that might help to improve criticiſm, and a good taſte. ſuch employment would oblige the gentlemen

of the Academy to attend its aſſemblies punctually, the reputation and advantage of it would ſpread over all Europe.

§. X. It is true the Academy would frequently happen to be divided upon theſe queſtions. the eſteem that ſome have for the antients; and others, for the moderns, might hinder them from agreeing in their judgments, but I apprehend no ill effects from a conteſt ſo calm, ſo polite, and ſo moderate as that would prove. for in this caſe, every one might freely follow his own taſte, and his own notions. ſuch an emulation might improve learning. may I preſume here to offer my thoughts on the ſubject?

1. I begin with wiſhing that the moderns might ſurpaſs the antients. I would rejoice to ſee in our age, and our nation, more vehement orators than Demoſthenes, and ſublimer poets than Homer. the world, inſtead of loſing, would certainly gain much by it. the antients would not be leſs valuable than they have always been; and the moderns would add a new ornament to human nature. the antients muſt ſtill retain the glory of having begun, and ſhewn the way to others; and of furniſhing them with the means to excel themſelves.

2. It would be very fooliſh to judge of any work by its date.

.....et, nisi quae terris semota, suisque
Temporibus defuncta videt, fastidit, et odit.

Si, quia Graecorum sunt antiquissima quaeque
Scripta, vel optima:.....

Scire velim chartis pretium quotus arroget annus.

Qui redit ad fastos, et virtutem aestimat annis:
Miraturque nihil, nisi quod Libitina sacravit.

Si veteres ita miratur, laudatque poetas,
Ut nihil anteferat, nihil illis comparet; errat.

Quod si tam Graecis novitas invisa fuisset
Quam nobis) quid nunc esset vetus? aut quid haberet
Quod legeret, tereretque viritim publicus usus?
Hor. Ep. L. II. Ep. i. v. 21, 28, 35, 48, 64, 90.

If Virgil had not dared to tread in Homer's steps; if Horace had not hoped to come near Pindar; what excellent works must we have lost? Homer and Pindar themselves did not attain to this high perfection at one step. no doubt they had the advantage of other poets who had smoothed the way for them; and whom they excelled at length. why may not our modern poets have the same hope? how much glory did Horace promise himself?

Dicam insigne recens, adhuc
Indictum ore alio----

Nil parvum, aut humili modo,
Nil mortale loquar----
Carm. lib. III. Od. xxv. v. 7, 17.

Exegi monumentum aere perennius.

Non omnis moriar; multaque pars mei
Vitabit Libitinam: usque ego posterâ
Crescam laude recens:----------

----------sume superbiam
Quaesitam meritis, et mihi Delphicâ
Lauro cinge volens, Melpomene, comam.
Ibid. Od. xxx. v. 1, 6, 14.

Why may we not likewise allow Malherbe to say

Apollon à portes ouvertes----
Liv. iii. Od. xii. v. 34.

3. I own the emulation of the moderns would be dangerous if it made them despise the antients and neglect to study them. the true way to excel them is to improve by every thing that is valuable in them; and endeavour (according to their notions) to imitate

beautiful nature more cloſely than they did. I ſhould readily ſay to thoſe authors of the preſent age whom I eſteem and honour moſt

----------vos exemplaria Graeca
Nocturnâ verſate manu, verſate diurnâ.
Hor. de Ar. Poet. v. 268.

if ever you ſhould happen to excel the antients: it is to themſelves you muſt owe the glory of overcoming them.

4. A prudent modeſt author ought to diſtruſt himſelf, and the praiſes he receives from his moſt valuable friends. ſelf-love will naturally biaſs him a little; and friendſhip will incline them to expreſs too great an admiration of his talents. what muſt he do then, if ſome friend being charmed with his writings ſhould ſay to him,

Neſcio quid majus naſcitur----------?
Proper. Lib. ii. Eleg. ult.

he ſhould not for ſuch a compliment, be leſs tempted to imitate the modeſty of the great and wiſe Virgil; who, when he was dying, would have burnt his Aeneid, which has been the inſtruction and delight of all ages. no one that has a clear view of a great and perfect work, as that poet had, can flatter himſelf ſo far as to think he has attained to it. nothing comes intirely up to his idea; nor ſatisfies his delicacy. whoever

therefore has a notion of what is truly perfect, perceives at the ſame time that he has not equalled it. and he who fancies he has attained to it, has not ſuch a diſtinct idea of it as he imagines. he muſt have a ſcanty genius, and a weak vain mind, who is intirely pleaſed with himſelf and his performances. the author who is thus pleaſed with himſelf, is generally pleaſed alone.

Quin ſine rivali, teque, et tua ſolus amares.
Hor. de Ar. Poet. v. 444.

Such an author may have ſome uncommon talents: but he muſt be maſter of more imagination, than judgment, and ſound criticiſm. on the contrary a poet that would equal the antients muſt ſhew a judgment ſuperior to the moſt lively, and fruitful imagination. an author ſhould be proof againſt all the praiſes his friends can give him: he ſhould often reviſe and correct what has been already applauded; and remember this rule,

------nonumque prematur in annum. Ibid. v. 388.

5. I am extremely glad to ſee any author that ſtrives to out-do the antients; tho' he ſhould never be able even to equal them. the public ought to encourage him, and commend his endeavours: they ſhould hope that he may ſtill riſe higher in his next attempt; and

they ſhould admire whatever he has already done that comes near the antient models.

——————————feliciter audet.

I would have all the ſons of Parnaſſus praiſe him:

——————————proxima Phoebi
Verſibus ille facit.———
Paſtores, hederâ crescentem ornate poetam.
Virg. Ecl. vii. v. 22, 25.

An author is the more to be eſteemed for ſhewing a diffidence of himſelf, in conſulting others about any piece he is ſtill willing to correct.

Imo hæc, quæ Varo necdum perfecta canebat.
Ecl. ix. v. 26.

I admire an author who applies to himſelf this beautiful paſſage;

Nam neque adhuc Varo videor, nec dicere Cinna
Digna: ſed argutos inter ſtrepere anſer olores.
Ibid. v. 35.

then I would have all parties unite to praiſe him:

Utque viro Phœbi chorus assurrexerit omnis.
Ecl. vi. v. 6.

if such an author be still dissatisfied with himself, while the public is highly pleased with him; his taste and genius are far above the very work for which he is admired.

6. I am not afraid to say that the most excellent of the antients have some faults. human nature has never permitted any one to arrive at entire perfection. if I were obliged to judge of the antients according to my own notions only, I should be very cautious in censuring them. they have this great advantage; that while we criticise their works, we walk as it were in the dark; because of our not having a thorow knowledge of their manners, their language, their taste, and their notions. if we had been their contemporaries, perhaps we should have censured them more freely. but I speak of the antients upon the authority of the antients themselves. Horace that penetrating critic, who was so much charmed with Homer, would vouch for me when I venture to affirm that this great poet, in his long work sometimes nodded a little.

-------quandoque bonus dormitat Homerus.
Verum opere in longo fas est obrepere somnum.
De Ar. Poet. v. 359.

Shall we then through a manifeſt prepoſſeſſion aſcribe more to antiquity, than the antients require; and condemn Horace by aſſerting, (againſt the plaineſt evidence of fact,) that there is the ſame force and beauty in every part of Homer's works?

7. If I may be allowed to offer my thoughts on this point, with all due deference to better judges; I muſt own that there are many defects to be ſeen in the moſt excellent of the antients. for inſtance, I cannot reliſh the Chorus in their tragedies: they interrupt the true action: they have not an exact ſhew of probability; becauſe ſome ſcenes ought not to have a number of acting ſpectators. the diſcourſes of the Chorus are often general and inſipid. I am apt to ſuſpect that theſe interludes were introduced before tragedy was brought to any perfection.

Farther, I find in the antients many ſtrokes of pleaſantry that are not very delicate. Cicero, the great Cicero himſelf, has ſeveral very poor quibbles.

I cannot ſee Horace's genius in this low piece of ſatire.

Proſcripti regis Rupili pus atque venenum.-----
Satyr. L. I. S. vii. v. 1.

we ſhould be apt to gape at reading it, if we did not know its author.

When I read this admirable ode of the ſame poet,

Qualem miniſtrum fulminis alitem——
Car. L. IV. Od. iv. v. 1.

I am always ſorry to find theſe words in it,

——quibus
Mos unde deductus per omne
Tempus Amazoniâ ſecuri
Dextras obarmet, quaerere diſtuli;
Nec ſcire fas eſt omnia.
v. 18.

take away this paſſage; and the ode is compleat and perfect. if it be ſaid that Horace deſigned to imitate Pindar in this ſort of parentheſis, which is agreeable to the tranſport of an ode; I will not diſpute that: but I am not ſo fond of imitation as to reliſh this flat and ſuperfluous parentheſis. we allow of a noble diſorder that flows from tranſport, and a concealed art: but we cannot approve of an exeurſion to make a curious remark on a frivolous ſubject: it flattens the whole ode.

Again, Cicero's reproaches againſt Mark Antony ſeem to me unbecoming the nobleneſs and excellence of his orations. his famous letter to Lucceius is full of the moſt groſs and ridiculous vanity. we find almoſt as much in the epiſtles of Pliny the younger. the antients fall often into an affectation in their ſtile that is

ſomewhat like what we now call pedantry. perhaps for want of ſome notions, that we have from religion and natural philoſophy, they too much admired ſeveral things that we value very little.

8. The wiſeſt antients perhaps hoped (as the moderns do now) that they ſhould ſurpaſs the models that they had to copy after. for example; why might not Virgil have hoped, by the † deſcent of Aeneas into hell, to out-do Homer's review of the ghoſts in the country of the Cimmerians? it is very probable that Virgil, notwithſtanding his modeſty, took pleaſure in handling a new topic, (in the ivth book of his Aeneid) that Homer had not touched on.

9. I confeſs that the antients have a great diſadvantage in the groſſneſs both of their religion, and their philoſophy. in Homer's time, their religion was only a frightful collection of fables as ridiculous as the tales of fairies. their philoſophy was entirely vain and ſuperſtitious. before Socrates their morality was extremely defective; tho' their legiſlators had given excellent rules for government. we muſt even acknowledge that Plato makes Socrates argue very weakly upon the immortality of the ſoul. that fine paſſage of Virgil

Felix qui potuit rerum cognoſcere cauſas,

Geor. ii. v. 490.

† Lib. vi.

in effect places all the happineſs of wiſe men in freeing themſelves from the dread of preſages, and of hell. this poet promiſes no other reward in the next life to the pureſt and moſt heroic virtue, but the pleaſures of ſporting on the graſs; or fighting on the ſand; or dancing, and ſinging verſes; or driving chariots; or having horſes and armour. and even theſe men, and the ſhows that amuſed them, were only vain ſhadows: yet theſe ſhadows long'd impatiently to enter again into bodies, that they might begin a-new to ſuffer all the miſeries of this life; which is only a continued ſickneſs that leads us to death. ſuch is the greateſt comfort that the antients propoſed to mankind:

Pars in gramineis exercent membra palaeſtris:
——quae lucis miſeris tam dira cupido?
Virg. Aen. L. vi. v. 642, 721.

Homer's heroes are not perſons of any worth; and the characters of his gods are ſtill inferior to theſe heroes who fall ſo much ſhort of the idea we have of worthy men. no-body would wiſh to have a father ſo vicious as Jupiter; nor a wife ſo unſupportable as Juno: and far leſs, ſo infamous as Venus. who would chuſe ſuch a boiſterous friend as Mars; or a ſervant ſo thieviſh as Mercury? theſe gods ſeem to have been invented by the enemy of mankind, on purpoſe to authoriſe all ſort of wickedneſs, and to ridicule the Deity.

this induced Longinus to ſay † that Homer made gods of thoſe men that were at the ſiege of Troy; and that on the contrary he made his gods mere men. he adds in the ſame chapter, that ‡ 'the Jewiſh lawgiver, who 'was no mean perſon, having a juſt notion of the 'greatneſs and power of God, expreſſed it admirably 'well in the beginning of his laws, by theſe words; 'God ſaid, let light be made; and it was made: let 'the earth be made, and it was made.'

10. It muſt be acknowledged that there are but few excellent authors among the antients: and that the works of ſome moderns are very fine. when we do not read the antients with the eagerneſs of a ſcholar; nor to inform ourſelves of ſome particular facts; our taſte confines us to a ſmall number of Greek and Latin books. there are indeed but few of them excellent; tho' learning was ſo long cultivated both by the Greeks and Romans. we cannot therefore wonder that our age, which has juſt ſhook off an ignorant unpoliteneſs, has produced but few French books that one can often peruſe with pleaſure. I could eaſily mention

† Sect. ix.

‡ Ταύτῃ γὲ ὁ τῶν Ἰουδαίων θεσμοθέτης, οὐχ ὁ τυχὼν ἀνὴρ, ἐπειδὴ τὴν τοῦ θείου δύναμιν καλὰ τὴν ἀξίαν ἐγνώρισε καὶ ἐξέφηνεν, εὐθὺς ἐν τῇ εἰσβολῇ γράψας τῶν νόμων, 'Εἶπεν ὁ 'θεὸς, φησί· τί; γενέσθω 'φῶς, καὶ ἐγένετο· γενέσθω 'γῆ, καὶ ἐγένετο.'

Longinus. §. ix.

ſeveral of the antients, whom we are not very fond of; as Ariſtophanes, Plautus, Seneca the tragedian, Lucan, and Ovid himſelf. I could likewiſe name a great many modern authors, whom we reliſh, and juſtly admire. but I will name none; leſt I ſhould offend their modeſty whom I might mention; and be unjuſt to others, by not naming them.

On the other hand we ought to conſider what may be ſaid in favour of the antients, now, beſides their having furniſhed our modern authors with almoſt all the beſt thoughts they have; we ought to ſet a value even on thoſe parts of the antients' works that are not faultleſs. Longinus obſerves that † 'a diſcourſe 'too much poliſhed and refined is in danger of being 'mean.' he adds that 'the ſublime ſtrain by its loftineſs becomes ſlippery and dangerous'-----again, he 'ſays' ‡ 'tho' I have obſerved ſeveral faults in Homer, and other famous authors; and tho' no body is 'more diſpleaſed with ſuch faults than I am; yet after all, I think------that they are but little eſcapes 'which they overlooked: for, having their attention

† Τὸ γὰρ ἐν παντὶ ἀκριβὲς, κίνδυνος σμικρότητος·----τὰ δὲ μεγάλα ἐπισφαλῆ δι' αὐτὸ γίνεσθαι τὸ μεγέθος.

Long. §. xxxiii.

‡ Παρατεθαμένος δ' ὑκ ὀλίγα ἐγὼ αὐτὸς ἁμαρτήματα, ἐν Ὁμήρῳ καὶ τῶν ἄλλων ὅσοι μέγιστοι, ἐν ἥκιστα τοῖς πλήσμασιν ἀρεσκόμενος, ὅμως δὲ ὐχ

'steddily fixed on what is truly great, they could not 'regard little things ----- § it is true what is faultless 'cannot be blamed: but that which is noble raises our 'admiration.' this judicious critic thought that it was in Homer's old-age that he sometimes nodded a little, in the tedious narrations of the Odysse: but he adds that † after all, this old-age is the old-age of an Homer. indeed some careless strokes of great painters excel the most finished pieces of a common artist. an ordinary critic cannot relish what is sublime: it does not affect him. he employs himself more agreeably about a misplaced word, or a careless expression. he does not fully perceive the beauty of the general plan, and the order and strength that runs throughout a compleat piece. I should like as well to see him busied about orthography, comma's, and points of interrogation. I pity the author that falls into such hands:

Barbarus has segetes-----

Virg. Ecl. i. v. 72.

ἁμαρτήματα μᾶλλον αὐτὰ ἑκούσια καλῶν, ἢ παροράματα δι' ἀμέλειαν, εἰκῇ πῃ καὶ ὡς ἔτυχεν, ὑπὸ μεγαλοφυίας ἀνεπιστάτως παρενηνεγμένα.

Long. §. xxxiii.

§ καὶ τὸ μὲν ἄπταιστον οὐ ψέγεται, τὸ μέγα δὲ καὶ θαυμάζεται.

Longinus, §. xxxvi.

† ἀλλὰ γῆρας διηγοῦμαι, γῆρας δ' ὅμως Ὁμήρου.

Id. §. ix.

the critic who cenſures nobly is delighted with what is noble in the work. he deſpiſes what Longinus calls ‡ an exact and ſcrupulous delicacy. Horace is of this taſte

Verum ubi plura nitent in carmine; non ego paucis
Offendar maculis, quas aut incuria fudit,
Aut humana parum cavit natura-----

De Ar. Poet. v. 351.

Beſides, the monſtrous groſſneſs of religion among the antients, and their want of true moral philoſophy till the days of Socrates, tend, in one reſpect, to the honour of the antient writer. for, certainly Homer was obliged to deſcribe his gods juſt ſuch as religion then repreſented them to the idolatrous world. he behoved to deſcribe men with thoſe manners that prevailed in Greece, and the leſſer Aſia. to blame Homer for copying nature faithfully, is to find fault with M. Mignard, M. de Troye, and M. Rigaut for drawing exact pictures. ought Momus to be drawn like Jupiter; Silenus, like Apollo; Alecto, like Venus; or Therſites, like Achilles? muſt our preſent court be painted with the ruffs and beards uſed in former reigns? ſince Homer therefore was to paint according to truth; ought we not to admire the order, proportion, grace, life, action, and ſentiments that he has given to every thing he has drawn. the more monſtrous and ridiculous

‡ §. XXXV.

his religion was, he is the more to be admired for having ennobled it with so many magnificent images: the grosser that the manners of his age were, the more surprizing it is to see that he has given so much lively force to what is in itself so irregular, absurd, and shocking. what would he not have done, if he had had a Socrates to draw, or an Aristides, a Timoleon, an Agis, a Cleomenes, a Numa, a Camillus, a Brutus, or an Aurelius?

Some are disgusted at the frugality of the manners which Homer describes, but besides that he behoved to represent this antient simplicity as faithfully as he did the grossness of the Pagan religion: I must add, that nothing can be more amiable than this antient simplicity of manners. can they who improve their reason, and love virtue, compare that vain ruinous luxury which is now the corruption of our manners, and a reproach to the nation, with the happy and elegant simplicity that the antients set before our eyes? When I read Virgil, I would wish I were with that old man he describes:

Namque sub Oebaliae memini me turribus altis,
Qua niger humectat flaventia culta Galesus,
Corycium vidisse senem: cui pauca relicti
Jugera ruris erant; nec fertilis illa juvencis,
Nec pecori opportuna seges-----
Regum aequabat opes animis; seràque revertens
Nocte domum dapibus mensas onerabat inemptis.

Primus vere roſam, atque autumno carpere poma;
Et cum triſtis hyems etiam nunc frigore ſaxa
Rumperet, et glacie curſus fraenaret aquarum;
Ille comam mollis jam nunc tondebat Acanthi
Aeſtatem increpitans ſeram, Zephyroſque morantes.
Geor. iv. v. 125, 132.

Has not Homer given beauty enough to Calypſo's iſle and the gardens of Alcinous, without the help of marble, or gilding? are not the employments of Nauſica more commendable than the gaming and intrigues of our women now? our fore-fathers would have bluſhed at them: and yet ſome dare deſpiſe Homer for not having prophetically deſcribed thoſe monſtrous manners, while as yet the world was ſo happy as to know nothing of them.

Virgil who had a full view of all the Roman magnificence, has yet given a beauty to king Evander's poverty; and made it an ornament to his poem.

Talibus inter ſe dictis ad tecta ſubibant
Pauperis Evandri: paſſimque armenta videbant
Romanoque foro, et lautis mugire carinis.
Ut ventum ad ſedes, haec, inquit, limina victor
Alcides ſubiit; haec illum regia cepit.
Aude hoſpes contemnere opes; et te quoque dignum
Finge Deo; rebuſque veni non aſper egenis.
Dixit, et anguſti ſubter faſtigia tecti

Ingentem Aeneas duxit; ſtratiſque locavit
Effultum foliis, et pelle Libyſtidinis urſae.
Aen. viii. v. 359.

the ſhameful corruption of our manners hinders us from raiſing our views to admire the ſublimity of theſe words,

Aude hoſpes contemnere opes----

Titian who excelled in country pieces paints a verdant valley, with a clear ſtream running through it, ſteep mountains, and diſtant proſpects bounded by the horizon. he never paints a fine parterre, with fountains and marble baſons. in like manner Virgil does not draw proud ſenators buſied in criminal intrigues: he repreſents an innocent labourer happy in his country-life.

Deinde ſatis fluvium inducit, rivoſque ſequentes,
Et cum exuſtus ager morientibus aeſtuat herbis,
Ecce ſupercilio clivoſi tramitis undam
Elicit: illa cadens raucum per laevia murmur
Saxa ciet, ſcatebriſque arentia temperat arva.
Geor. i. v. 106.

This poet even ventures to compare a free, peaceful, country life with the troubleſome delights that

people of great fortunes enjoy; and he imagines nothing more happy than a moderate condition; in which a wise man may be equally secure from envying the prosperity of some; and sympathizing in the miseries of others.

Illum non populi fasces, non purpura regum
Flexit----
——————————neque illo
Aut doluit miserans inopem, aut invidit habenti.
Quos rami fructus, quos ipsa volentia rura
Sponte tulere suâ, carpsit——

Geor. ii. v. 495.

Horace fled from the delights and magnificence of Rome, to enjoy himself in solitude.

Fastidiosam desere copiam, et
Molem propinquam nubibus arduis;
Omitte mirari beatae
Fumum, et opes, strepitumque Romae.

Car. L. iii. v. 9. Od. 29.

-------mihi jam non regia Roma,
Sed vacuum Tibur placet, aut imbelle Tarentum.

Ep. L. II. Ep. vii. v. 44.

When poets would charm the imagination of men

they lead them far from great cities, and make them forget the luxury of the age: they carry them back to the golden age: they repreſent ſhepherds dancing on the flowry graſs, under the ſhade of ſome grove, in a delightful ſeaſon; rather than turbulent courts, and great men, who are unhappy by their very grandeur.

† Sweet ſolitude, th' abode of innocence!
Where far from all the objects of vain pomp,
My eaſe begins, and reſtleſs trouble ends;
Valleys, rocks, rivers, pleaſing lonely ſhades;
If ye were witneſſes of my diſquiet,
Henceforth obſerve my calm intire content.

Nothing ſo plainly ſhews the corrupted manners of a nation as this diſdainful luxury that deſpiſes the frugal ſimplicity of the antients. it was this corruption that overthrew Rome. ‡ 'they began (ſays Saluſt) to

† Agreables deſerts, ſejour de l'innocence,
Où loin des vains objets de la magnificence
Commence mon repos, et finit mon tourment,
Vallons, fleuves, rochers, aimable ſolitude,
Si vous futes temoins de mon inquietude,
Soyez-le deſormais de mon contentment.

‡ Inſuevit amare, potare, ſigna, tabulas pictas, vaſa coelata mirari——divitiae honori eſſe coeperunt----hebeſcere virtus; paupertas probro haberi-----domos atque villas ——in urbium modum exaedificatas———a privatis compluribus ſubverſos montes——eſſe; quibus mihi ludibrio vi-

'intrigue; to carouſe; to grow fond of imagery, pain-
'tings, carved veſſels----wealth began to be reckon-
'ed honourable-----virtue to languiſh; and poverty to
'be thought a reproach----houſes and country ſeats
'were built like towns----mountains were levelled by
'private perſons-----who ſeemed to me to ſport away
'their riches----the earth and ſeas were ranſacked for
'delicacies-----' the poor Ithaca of Ulyſſes pleaſes me far more than a city ſhining with ſuch extravagant magnificence. happy were mankind if they could be ſatisfied with ſuch pleaſures as may be enjoyed without guilt or ruin. it is not the noble ſimplicity of the antients that ought to be corrected; but our folly and pernicious vanity.

I cannot believe what ſome learned men have imagined; who tell us that Homer has interwoven in his poems, the moſt refined politics, the pureſt morality, and the ſublimeſt notions of theology. I cannot indeed diſcover theſe wonders in that poet's works: but I perceive the uſeful inſtruction he deſigned to give the Greeks whom he wiſhed to ſee always united; and thereby more powerful than the Aſiatics. he ſhewed them that Achilles' reſentment againſt Agamemnon brought greater misfortunes on Greece, than the Trojan arms.

dentur fuiſſe divitiae——veſcendi cauſa terra marique omnia exquirere——
Sal. Bell. Catil.

Quicquid delirant reges, plectuntur Achivi.
Seditione, dolis——

Hor. Ep. L. I. Ep. ii. v. 14.

In vain did the Platoniſts of the lower empire (who impoſed on Julian,) fancy that there are allegories and deep myſteries in the ſtories of the deities that Homer deſcribes. theſe myſteries are chimerical. it appears from the holy ſcripture; from the fathers who confuted the heathen idolatry; and from the plaineſt evidence of fact, that the religion of the antients was monſtrous and extravagant. but Homer did not frame it: he found it eſtabliſhed; and could not alter it. he has adorned it: he has concealed much art in his work: he has ranged all the parts of it in ſuch an order as continually raiſes the reader's curioſity. he has painted every thing with ſimplicity, beauty, force, majeſty, and paſſion. what can we deſire more?

It is natural for the moderns who excel in elegance, and ingenious turns, to fancy that they have ſurpaſſed the antients; whoſe chief excellence is a natural ſimplicity. but I muſt beg leave here to propoſe a ſort of apologue. the inventers of the Gothic kind of architecture (which is ſaid to have come from the Arabians,) fancied no doubt that they had out-done the Greek architects. a Grecian ſtructure has nothing in it that is merely ornamental. the parts that are neceſſary to ſupport, or to cover it, as the pillars, and the

cornish, become ornaments only by their beautiful proportion. every thing is simple, exact, and useful. we see nothing in it either bold, or fanciful, that can impose on the sight. the proportions are so just, that nothing seems very noble, tho' the whole really be so. every thing is designed to satisfy true reason. on the contrary the Gothic architect, upon very slender pillars, raises up a vast roof into the clouds. one would fancy it were going to tumble, tho' it stands many ages. it is all full of windows, roses, and little knacks. the stones seem to be pincked, and cut-out like paper-baubles. every thing looks gay and light; as it were hanging in the air. was it not natural now for the first Gothic architects to imagine that by their vain refinements they had out-done the Greek simplicity? now only change the names; and put poets and orators instead of architects: Lucan must naturally fancy he was a greater poet than Virgil. Seneca the tragedian must imagine he was brighter than Sophocles. Tasso perhaps hoped he should out-strip Virgil and Homer. if these authors thought so, they were much deceived, and the most excellent modern authors should beware of the like mistake.

While I speak thus freely, I would not be thought to determine this point. I only advise those who adorn the present age not to despise the antient writers who have been so long admired. I do not extol the antients as models without any defect. I would not even dis-

courage any one from hoping to ſurpaſs them. on the contrary, I wiſh I could ſee the moderns excel by ſtudying thoſe very antients whom they ſhall overcome. but I ſhould think I exceeded the bounds preſcribed me, if I pretended to adjudge the prize to either of the contending parties:

Non noſtrûm inter vos tantas componere lites:
Et vitula tu dignus, et hic-------
Virg. Ecl. iii. v. 108.

You preſſed me, Sir, to declare my thoughts: and I have not ſo much conſulted my ability, as my zeal for the Academy. perhaps I have gone too far; but I deſigned not to ſay a word that ſhould make me ſeem partial. it is time for me to conclude.

Phoebus volentem praelia me loqui,
Victas et urbes, increpuit lyra.
Ne parva Tyrrhenum per aequor
Vela darem------
Hor. Car. L. iv. Od. xv. v. 1.

I ſhall always remain with a ſincere and high eſteem,

SIR, &c.

THE END.

A

DISCOURSE

PRONOUNCED

BY

Mr. DE FENELON,

AFTERWARDS

ARCHBISHOP

OF

CAMBRAY,

PRECEPTOR

TO THE

YOUNG PRINCES OF FRANCE,

WHEN HE WAS ADMITTED

A MEMBER

OF THE

FRENCH ACADEMY

INTO THE PLACE OF

Mr. PELISSON,

MASTER OF REQUESTS.

A

DISCOURSE

PRONOUNCED BEFORE THE

FRENCH ACADEMY.

I Ought, Gentlemen, to ſucceed to Mr. Peliſſon's eloquence, as well as to his place, to be able to make a ſuitable acknowledgment for the honour I receive, and to repair the loſs this ſociety ſuſtains in the death of that valuable man.

By tranſlating in his early youth the greateſt part of Homer, he made himſelf maſter of the art of heightning the leaſt deſcription with ſpirit and beauty. in a little time he began a work upon the civil-law, which had no other fault, than that it was not finiſhed. from theſe noble eſſays he ſoon proceeded to his maſterpiece, the hiſtory of the Academy. facility, invention, elegance, inſinuation, propriety of thought, and ingenious turn of expreſſion, the diſtinguiſhing characteriſtics of his genius, ſhine throughout the piece. we may apply to him, what Horace ſaid of the Romans, he dared ſucceſsfully; his hands made flowers ſpring up on all ſides; whatever he touched, received a new grace. the moſt common herbs of the field

were fitted by him to be the crowns of heroes; and the rule, ſo neceſſary for others, of chuſing no ſubject, that is not capable of being embelliſhed, did not ſeem to regard him. his noble and eaſy ſtile reſembled the motions of the fabulous deities, who glide through the air, without touching the earth. his relations diſcover ſuch exquiſite judgment in the choice of circumſtances, a variety ſo entertaining, turns ſo new and proper even in recounting the moſt common things, ſo much induſtry in connecting the facts, and ſo much ſkill in tranſporting the reader into the very ſcenes of action, that agreeably deceived by the artificial texture of the narration, he imagines himſelf actually preſent, and an eye-witneſs of every paſſage.

Every one reads with pleaſure and admiration the deſcription of the birth of the Academy, fancies himſelf in the very houſe of Mr. Conrart, which, if I may uſe the expreſſion, was the nurſery of it; remarks with infinite delight the ſimplicity, order, politeneſs, and elegance, which reigned in thoſe aſſemblies, and attracted the favour of an eminent miniſter; then the jealouſies and umbrages, which interrupted the calm of thoſe happy beginnings; and afterwards the reputation, which the academy acquired by the writings of her firſt members. there we ſee the illuſtrious Racan, the inheritor of Malherbe's harmony, Vaugelas, renowned for the delicacy of his ear in reforming our language, Corneille, whoſe great and bold characters

ſhew, that he drew with a maſterly hand, Voiture ever accompanied with an eaſy, ſmiling train of graces, there we diſcover merit and virtue in ſtrict alliance with erudition and delicacy, birth and rank with a refined taſte of literature. but I am inſenſibly carried beyond the bounds, which I preſcribed myſelf, and while I am ſpeaking of the dead, I come too near the living, whoſe modeſty might be offended with my encomiums.

Whilſt this fortunate revolution in favour of learning was depending, Mr. Peliſſon takes occaſion to recommend to poſterity the character of the great encourager of it. Cardinal Richlieu at that juncture was changing the whole face of affairs in Europe, and aſſembling the ſcattered remains of our civil wars, in order to lay the foundation of a power ſuperior to all others. ever penetrating the cloſeſt deſigns of our enemies, impenetrable in reſpect to thoſe of his maſter, he had the addreſs to direct in his cabinet the motions of the moſt ſecret ſprings of foreign courts, and foment and maintain the ſpirit of diviſion amongſt them. ſteady in his maxims, and inviolable in his promiſes, he ſhewed the ſurpriſing effects of a wiſe adminiſtration, and of allies placing an entire confidence in their confederates. endued by nature with an exquiſite ſagacity in knowing men, and the way to employ them according to their reſpective talents, he engaged them to his perſon, and afterwards in his deſigns for the ad-

vantage of the public. by theſe powerful arts, the pride of the imperious houſe of Auſtria, which threatned to reduce all Europe under her yoke, received a mortal blow. he put an end to the repeated rebellions of the Huguenots, which of all his ſucceſſes was the moſt eſſential to the internal peace of France. and, to crown all, he introduced peace into a court, where there had been a laſting ſcene of diſcord, and this was a work of the moſt difficulty from his having an aſpiring and jealous nobility to contend with, whom he found in poſſeſſion of an independent ſtate. thus time, which effaces the reputation of others, ſerves only to advance his; and the farther he is removed from us, he is ſeen to the greater advantage. but amidſt his painful offices he found ſome moments of agreeable leiſure, and relieved the anxieties of buſineſs with the charms of eloquence and poetry. he received into his boſom the Academy, whilſt it was in its infancy, and a diſcerning magiſtrate, a favourer of learning, was his ſucceſſor in the protection of it. Lewis adds to it the luſtre, which never fails of diſtinguiſhing, whatever he honours with his countenance. under the ſhadow of this great name, you apply yourſelves inceſſantly to reform and purify our language.

Since men of learning and judgment have returned back to the antient ſtandards, the abuſe of wit and language is reformed; and a way of writing more natural, more nervous, and more conciſe, is introduced.

no farther care is employed upon words, than as they are of abſolute neceſſity to expreſs our thoughts in their full force and extent; and no other thoughts are allowed of, but ſuch as are juſt, ſolid, concluſive, and ariſing from the ſubject. the uſe of learning, which was formerly affected with ſo much vain parade, is now rejected, except in caſes, where it is indiſpenſable; even wit itſelf receives a check, becauſe the perfection of art conſiſts in imitating the ſimplicity of nature ſo exactly, that it may be miſtaken for her. from hence a luxurious fancy no longer paſſes for wit; but that title is adjudged to belong only to a regular and correct genius, which converts every thing to ſentiment, which cloſely follows the modeſty and plainneſs of nature, which brings all her thoughts to the ſcale of reaſon, and eſteems nothing beautiful, that is not conformable to truth. the preſent age is convinced, that the florid ſtile, however agreeable and engaging it may appear, is not the true ſublime, which rejecting all oſtentatious ornaments of pomp and magnificence, is found only in the natural.

Men are at laſt convinced, that they ought to write, as the Raphaels, the Carraches, and the Pouſſins painted, that they ſhould neither labour to invent unnatural extravagancies, nor trifle with the pencil to ſhew the vivacity of their imagination, but employ their utmoſt care to copy after nature. it is now acknowledged, that the beauties of diſcourſe reſemble thoſe of ar-

chitecture. the boldeſt pieces, and thoſe, which come neareſt to the Gothic order, are not eſteemed the beſt. mere ornaments, which are of no uſe to the edifice, ought not to take place, but all the parts neceſſary to the ſupport of it, ſhould be ſkilfully turned into ornaments, provided a ſtrict regard be had to obſerve the juſt proportions.

Thus in a diſcourſe we retrench all uſeleſs embelliſhments, which neither ſerve to illuſtrate what is obſcure, nor to repreſent in the moſt lively colours what ſhould be moſt expoſed to view, nor to prove a truth by a variety of engaging turns, nor to excite the paſſions, which are the only ſprings capable of moving and perſuading the audience; for paſſion is the ſoul of diſcourſe. this, Gentlemen, hath been the progreſs of letters for ſixty years paſt; which Mr. Peliſſon would have deſcribed, if he might have continued his hiſtory of the Academy.

A miniſter, ever ready to employ perſons of the moſt eminent abilities, brought him out of the courſe of his ſtudies into public buſineſs. then how great was his probity, and his integrity, how conſtant his gratitude towards his benefactor? in that poſt of truſt, to which he was advanced, his whole endeavours turned upon doing good, upon diſcovering, and employing merit. to ſhew his virtues in their beſt lights, he wanted nothing but to be unfortunate. he became ſo, Gentlemen. his innocence and his courage appeared

clearly in the priſon. the Baſtile proved an agreeable ſolitude to him, where he applied himſelf to the improvement of learning.

Happy captivity, deſireable chains, which were the means of reducing at laſt to the yoke of faith a mind, which before knew no reſtraint! during this leiſure he went up to the ſources of tradition to fetch arguments, wherewith he might oppoſe truth; but truth prevailed, and appeared to him in all her charms. he came out of priſon, honoured with the king's eſteem and favour; but what is ſtill greater, he came out, determined to be an humble proſylete to the Church. the ſincerity and diſintereſtedneſs of his converſion occaſioned his delaying to perform the ceremony of it, from the apprehenſion that his talents might draw on him the recompenſe of an employment, which a perſon of leſs virtue than himſelf would have ſollicited.

From that moment he never diſcontinued ſpeaking, writing, and employing all the favours his credit with his prince had procured him, towards recalling his wandring brethren. happy fruit of the moſt fatal error! we muſt have felt within ourſelves the anxious pains, which are to be undergone in this difficult paſſage from darkneſs to light, to be animated with that vivacity, and endued with that patience, tenderneſs, and delicacy of charity, which ſhine in his controverſies.

Notwithſtanding the weak condition, to which he

was reduced, we ſaw him at the foot of the altar, and at the point of death, celebrating his feaſt, to uſe his own expreſſion, and the anniverſary of his converſion. alas! we heard him, excited by his zeal and his courage, promiſe with a dying voice, that he would finiſh his great work upon the ſacrament. yes, I ſaw him with tears in his eyes, I heard him, he ſaid all that a Chriſtian, nouriſhed for ſo many years with the word of God, can ſay, to prepare himſelf to receive the holy ſacrament. it is true, death, putting on the image of ſleep, ſurpriſed him; but ſhe found him well prepared.

In fine, Gentlemen, the affairs of juſtice and religion, which the king had committed to his care, did not divert him from applying himſelf to the polite ſciences, to which he was deſtined by nature. his pen was immediately pitched upon to write the hiſtory of the preſent reign. with what joy ſhall we behold, Gentlemen, in this hiſtory, a prince, who in his early youth, finiſhes by his ſteadineſs, what Henry the Great his grandfather ſcarce dared to attempt? Lewis extinguiſhes the rage of duelling, whereby the moſt noble blood of France had been ſpilt. he raiſes his ſinking authority, regulates his revenues, and introduces diſcipline among his troops. whilſt with one hand he levels with the ground the walls of ſo many ſtrong places, in the ſight of his aſtoniſhed enemies, with the other he makes the polite arts and ſciences flouriſh by

his munificence, in the peaceful boſom of France.

But what do I ſee, Gentlemen? a new confederacy, formed of the moſt conſiderable potentates of Europe, threatning to beſiege this vaſt kingdom, as if it were a ſingle fortreſs. Lewis alone, during the ſpace of five years, makes important conqueſts, and gains ſignal victories over the united forces of this league, which had the preſumption to boaſt, that they would oppreſs him with eaſe, and make his provinces become the ſcene of deſolation.

But who dares attempt to deſcribe Lewis in this laſt campaign, more glorious by his patience, than his conqueſt? he is determined to beſiege the moſt impregnable place of the low countries, encompaſſed by two rivers, guarded by a citadel raiſed on an inacceſſible rock, conſiſting of ſeveral fortreſſes, tho' but one place, having one army within for garriſon, and another without, compoſed of an incredible number of Engliſh, Dutch, Spaniſh and German forces, commanded by a chief, accuſtomed to riſque all hazards and dangers in battle, and at a time, when nature herſelf altered her courſe, and cauſed an inundation in the ſummer ſeaſon. in the mean while he receives intelligence, that his fleet, however invincible in courage, oppreſſed by the unequal numbers of his enemies, is burnt, and he ſupports this ſtroke of ill fortune with as much temper, as if he had been exerciſed in adverſity. he is calm and ſerene under difficulties, full of

expedients under diſappointments, and ſo humane in reſpect to the beſieged, that he even prolongs the ſiege, however dangerous, to ſpare the city, which reſiſts him, and which it is in his power to reduce to aſhes. he never places his confidence in the multitude of his experienced ſoldiers, in the noble ardour of his captains, in his perſonal valour, which animates his whole army, or in the many victories, which he has gained, but in the inacceſſible azylum of the Lord of Hoſts. he returns at length victorious, with his eyes directed towards the throne of the Almighty, who diſpoſes of victory according to his divine will; and what is ſtill more glorious than all his ſucceſſes, he forbids our praiſes.

Poſſeſſed of a grandeur ſo humble and modeſt, which is not more above all encomiums, than it is above all events, may he, Gentlemen, rely only upon his virtue, ſhew an inviolable regard to truth and juſtice, be known to his enemies, (this wiſh comprehends the proſperity of Europe) become the umpire of all nations, after having removed their jealouſies. may he extend his goodneſs to his people in the bleſſings of a profound peace, be long the delight of mankind, and reign over them in ſuch a manner, as if he had no other view, than the glory of God, who reigned over him.

This, Gentlemen, is, what Mr. Peliſſon would have immortalized in his hiſtory. the Academy has

produced more perſons capable of tranſmitting it to late poſterity; but ſo vaſt a ſubject invites you all to write. enter, therefore, Gentlemen, upon this glorious work of celebrating ſo diſtinguiſhed a reign, I cannot give a greater teſtimony of my unfeigned zeal for the honour of this Society, than by forming a wiſh ſo worthy of it.

THE END.

DIALOGUES OF THE DEAD

BY THE

ARCHBISHOP OF CAMBRAY;

CONTAINING

HIS DIALOGUES BETWEEN DEMOSTHENES AND CICERO, HORACE AND VIRGIL.

DEMOSTHENES AND CICERO.

A parallel between these two orators, wherein is given the character of true eloquence.

CICERO.

WHAT! dost thou pretend that I was but an ordinary orator?

DEMOSTHENES.

Not an ordinary one; for it is not over an ordinary person that I affect superiority. thou wert doubtless a celebrated orator. thou hadst great parts; but didst

frequently deviate from the point wherein perfection conſiſts.

CICERO.

And pray hadſt thou no faults at all?

DEMOSTHENES.

I believe I can be taxed with none in point of eloquence.

CICERO.

Canſt thou compare richneſs of genius with me? thou who art dry, unadorn'd, who art ever confined within narrow and contracted limits; thou doſt not amplify any ſubject; thou from whom nothing can be retrenched, ſo jejune, ſo ſtarved, if I may uſe the term, is the manner in which thou treat'ſt thy ſubjects: whereas I give mine a length, which diſplays a copiouſneſs and fertility of genius, which gave men of judgment occaſion to ſay, that nothing could be added to my works.

DEMOSTHENES.

He from whom nothing can be retrenched, hath ſaid nothing but what is perfect.

CICERO.

He to whom nothing can be added, hath omitted nothing that could embelliſh his work.

DEMOSTHENES.

Thou findeſt thy diſcourſes more replete with flaſhes of wit than mine? ſpeak honeſtly, is not that the reaſon thou exalteſt thyſelf above me?

CICERO.

I will even own it to thee then, ſince thou talk'ſt ſo. my pieces are infinitely more ornate than thine. they ſpeak far more wit, more ingenuity of turn, more art, more eaſe. I exhibit the ſame thing under twenty different ſhapes. when people heard my orations, they could not forbear admiring my parts, and being continually ſurpriſed at my art; they were ever ſhouting and interrupting me, in order to applaud and extol me. thou muſt have been heard very quietly, and thy audience, I fancy, gave thee no interruption.

DEMOSTHENES.

What thou ſayeſt of us both is true. thou miſtakeſt only in the concluſion thou draweſt from it. thou didſt take up the aſſembly with thyſelf: I took it up only with the affairs I ſpoke upon. people admired thee; I was forgot by my audience, who ſaw nothing but the courſe I wanted them to take. thou didſt entertain with the flaſhes of thy wit. I ſtruck down with bolts of thunder. thou madeſt men ſay: how finely he ſpeaks! I made them ſay: come on, let us march againſt Philip. they praiſed thee: they were too much carried out of themſelves to praiſe me. when thou didſt harangue, thou appeareddſt ornate; none diſcovered in me any ornament: there was nothing in my pieces but preciſe, ſtrong, clear arguments; and then impulſes like lightning which nothing could reſiſt. thou wert a perfect orator, when thou wert, like me, ſimple,

grave, auſtere, without apparent art; in a word, when thou wert Demoſthenical: but when wit, turn, and art ſhone forth in thy diſcourſes; then wert thou mere Cicero, departing ſo far from perfection, as thou departedſt from my character.

DIALOGUE II.

DEMOSTHENES AND CICERO.

The difference between the Orator and the true Philoſopher.

CICERO.

TO have lived in the time of Plato, and even to have been his diſciple, methinks you profited very little by ſuch an advantage.

DEMOSTHENES.

Have you then obſerved nothing in my orations, you who read them to ſo good purpoſe, that ſavoured of Plato's maxims, and his manner of perſuading?

CICERO.

That is not what I mean: you were the greateſt orator of the Greeks; but then you were nothing but an orator. as for me, though I never knew Plato but in his writings, and lived about three hundred years after him, I ſtrove to imitate him in philoſophy; I made him known to the Romans, and was the firſt who in-

mances. I blamed what is wrong, and pointed out the rules of the right, but I executed no great work like your heroic poem.

VIRGIL.

Indeed my Horace, we have dwelt too long for honeſt men, upon each other's praiſe. I grow aſhamed of it. let us ceaſe the theme.

THE END.

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beautiful than the evocation of ſpirits in the Odyſſey.

VIRGIL.

My laſt books were neglected. I did not intend to have left them ſo imperfect. you know I wanted to burn them.

HORACE.

What pity it had been! that was an exceſs of delicacy. any one may ſee, that the author of the Georgics could have finiſhed the Eneid with the ſame care. I do not ſo much mind that extreme exactneſs, as the elevation of genius, the oeconomy of the whole work, the ſtrength and boldneſs of the painting. to deal ingenuouſly, if any thing hinders you from equalling Homer, it is your being more poliſhed, more correct, more finiſhed; but leſs ſimple, leſs ſtrong, leſs ſublime. for with a ſingle touch he ſets nature unveiled before our eyes.

VIRGIL.

I own I did ſome violence to ſimple nature, in order to adapt myſelf to the taſte of a magnificent people, delicate in every thing relating to politeneſs. Homer ſeems to forget the reader and to mind nothing but the painting of real nature in every circumſtance. in this I yield to him.

HORACE.

You are ſtill that modeſt Virgil, who was ſo backward to puſh himſelf at the court of Auguſtus. now I have told you freely what I thought of your works,

tell me in the ſame manner the faults of mine. ſure you do not think me incapable of acknowledging them.

VIRGIL.

There are, methinks, ſome paſſages of your odes which might have been retrenched without taking ought from the ſubject, and which make no part of the deſign. I am not ignorant of the tranſport eſſential to the ode. but there are ſome things a little foreign, into which a beautiful tranſport never ſtrays. there are alſo ſome paſſionate, marvelous paſſages, where you will perhaps obſerve ſomewhat wanting, either in point of harmony, or the ſimplicity of the paſſion. never did man give a happier turn to ſpeech, to make it expreſs a fine ſentiment with conciſeneſs and delicacy. the words become new by the uſe you make of them. but all is not equally flowing; there are ſome things I ſhould think turned with rather too much art.

HORACE.

As for harmony, I do not wonder that you are ſo difficult. for nothing is ſo ſmooth and harmonious as your numbers. their cadence alone is ſo moving, that it draws tears from the eyes.

VIRGIL.

The ode requires a quite different harmony, which you have almoſt always hit on, and which is more varied than mine.

HORACE.

After all, I produced nothing but petty perfor-

of my greateſt glory, was alſo the time of my greateſt toils, and of my greateſt dangers. I was frequently in hazard of my life, and the odium I then incurred broke out afterwards by my exile. in fine, it was nothing but my eloquence that occaſioned my death, and had I not puſhed Antony ſo hard, I had been ſtill in life. I ſay nothing of your misfortunes; it were needleſs to recal them to your mind. but neither of us have any thing to blame but fate, or fortune, if you will, which made it our lot to be born in ſo corrupt times, that it was impoſſible to reform our commonwealths, or even to prevent their ruin.

DEMOSTHENES.

It was therein we wanted judgment, undertaking impoſſibilities: for it was not our people that forced us to take care of the public affairs, and we were not at all engaged in them by our birth. I forgive a prince born in the purple for governing, as he can, a ſtate, which the gods have committed to his charge, by cauſing him to be born of a certain race, ſeeing he is not at freedom to abandon that truſt, how bad ſoever he find his ſituation: but a mere private perſon ought to think of nothing but regulating himſelf and governing his own family; he ought never to deſire public offices, far leſs to court them: if they be forced upon him, he may accept them out of love to his country; but when once he has not the liberty of doing good, and his citizens grow regardleſs both of the laws and of rea-

ſon, he ought to return into private life, and conten himſelf with deploring the public calamities which h finds himſelf unable to avert.

CICERO.

By your way of reckoning, my friend Pomponius Atticus was wiſer than I, and even than Cato himſelf, whom we ſo highly extolled.

DEMOSTHENES.

Yes doubtleſs, Atticus was a true philoſopher: Cato was unſeaſonably obſtinate in pretending to reform a people who would live no longer in liberty, and you yielded too eaſily to Caeſar's fortune; at leaſt, you did not enough preſerve your dignity.

CICERO.

But after all, is not eloquence a good thing, nay a great gift of the Gods?

DEMOSTHENES.

It is very good in itſelf: 'tis only the uſe of it that may be bad, as when it is employed towards tickling the paſſions of the people, or the gratifying of our own. and what elſe did we in our virulent declamations againſt our enemies? I againſt Midias or Eſchines, you againſt Piſo, Vatinius or Antony? how egregiouſly did our paſſions and intereſts make us offend againſt truth and juſtice! the true uſe of eloquence is to ſet truth in its proper light, and to perſuade others to their true intereſt, that is, to juſtice, and the other virtues. it was the uſe that Plato made of it, that neither of us imitated.

DIALOGUE

BETWEEN VIRGIL AND HORACE.

The characters of those two Poets.

VIRGIL.

WHat peaceful happineſs do we enjoy on theſe ſtill flowery lawns, faſt by the ſide of this cool, limpid, ſoftly gliding ſtream, and by the fragrant wood ſo near refreſhed!

HORACE.

If you don't take care, you'll make an eclogue: a work to ſhades denied. ſee Homer, Heſiod, and Theocritus; with laurel crowned they hear their verſes ſung, but make no more.

VIRGIL.

I learn with joy that your's hold the delight, after ſo many ages, of the learned. you cheated not yourſelf, when, in your odes, you ſaid aſſured, " I ſhall " not wholly die."

HORACE.

My works, 'tis true, have ſtood the ſhock of time: but one muſt love you as much as I do, not to be jealous of your glory. for you in rank are next to Homer placed.

VIRGIL.

Our muſes ought by no means to be jealous of each other. their kinds are different. what in you is admirable is variety: your odes are tender and beautiful, often vehement, rapid, ſublime. your ſatires are ſimple, natural, conciſe, and poinant. one there finds a profound knowledge of man, a moſt ſerious philoſophy with a pleaſant turn, which reforms mens manners, and inſtructs while it entertains them. your Art of Poetry ſhews, that you had the whole compaſs of acquired parts, and all the ſtrength of genius neceſſary to execute the greateſt works, whether epic poem or tragedy.

HORACE.

'Tis a good jeſt to hear you talk of variety, you who have given your Eclogues the native tenderneſs of Theocritus: your Georgics are full of the moſt ſmiling pictures: you embelliſh and humour all nature: and then for your Eneid, the beautiful order, the magnificence, the ſtrength, and ſublimity of Homer ſhine throughout the whole.

VIRGIL.

But I did no more than follow him ſtep by *ſtep*.

HORACE.

You did by no means follow Homer, when you treated the loves of Dido. that fourth book is quite an original. ſo likewiſe none can rob you of the praiſe of having made Eneas's deſcent into hell more

DEMOSTHENES.

Say rather, you loved glory much, and virtue little.

CICERO.

Upon what grounds do you judge ſo hardly of me?

DEMOSTHENES.

Upon your own diſcourſes: at the very time you played the philoſopher, did you not pronounce thoſe fine orations, wherein you flattered Caeſar your tyrant, more ſervilely, than ever was Philip by his ſlaves? yet we know how you loved him; it well appeared after his death, and in his life-time you did not ſpare him in your letters to Atticus.

CICERO.

It was expedient to conform one's ſelf to the times, and to endeavour to ſooth the tyrant, leſt he ſhould grow ſtill worſe.

DEMOSTHENES.

You talk like a good orator, though like a bad philoſopher: but what became of your philoſophy after his death? who obliged you to enter again into public affairs?

CICERO.

The Roman people, who looked upon me as their ſole ſupport.

DEMOSTHENES.

Your vanity prompted you to think ſo, and delivered you up to a young man, who made a tool of you. but let us return to the point: you were always an orator, never a philoſopher.

CICERO.

And were you ever any thing elſe?

DEMOSTHENES.

No, I confeſs; but then I never made any other profeſſion, I deceived no body: I came early to underſtand that I muſt chooſe between rhetoric and philoſophy; that each required a whole man. the deſire of glory touched me: I thought it a fine thing for me who was but a private citizen, and a common tradeſman's ſon, to govern the people by my eloquence, and make a ſtand againſt the power of Philip. I loved the public-weal, and the liberty of Greece; but I may now confeſs I loved myſelf ſtill better, and was very ſenſible of the pleaſure of receiving a crown in full theatre, and of leaving my ſtatue in the public Place, with a pompous inſcription upon it. now I ſee things in another light, and perceive that Socrates was in the right, when he aſſured Gorgias, 'that eloquence was 'no ſuch fine thing as he imagined; were it even to 'attain its end, and render a man abſolute maſter in 'his commonwealth.' this both you and I attained: confeſs now, we were nothing the happier.

CICERO.

'Tis true our lives were two continued ſcenes of toils and dangers. I had no ſooner defended Roſcius, than I was fain to fly into Greece, to avoid the indignation of Sylla. the accuſation of Verres drew a world of enemies upon me; my conſulſhip, the time

troduced that kind of writing among them; inſomuch that I united as far as I was capable, in one and the ſame perſon, eloquence and philoſophy.

DEMOSTHENES.

And ſo you think you were a great philoſopher?

CICERO.

To be ſo, it is ſufficient to love wiſdom, and to labour to acquire knowledge and virtue: I think I may give myſelf the title without exceſs of vanity.

DEMOSTHENES.

For an orator, I grant you were the firſt of your nation; and even the Greeks of your time admired you: but for a philoſopher, I cannot grant it. one is not that at ſo eaſy a rate.

CICERO.

You don't know what it coſt me: my lucubrations, my labours, my meditations; the books I read, the maſters I heard, the treatiſes I compoſed.

DEMOSTHENES.

All that is not philoſophy.

CICERO.

What more, pray, is requiſite?

DEMOSTHENES.

To do what you ſaid of Cato by way of deriſion, to ſtudy philoſophy, not in order to diſcover the truths it teaches, to argue about it as moſt men do; but in order to reduce it to practice.

CICERO.

And did not I do ſo? did not I live up to the doctrine of Plato, and Ariſtotle, which I had embraced?

DEMOSTHENES.

Drop we Ariſtotle: I might perhaps diſpute him the quality of a philoſopher, nor can I have any great opinion of a Greek, who was attached to a king, and that to Philip: as for Plato, I maintain that you never followed his maxims.

CICERO.

'Tis true that in my youth, and during the greateſt part of my time, I followed the active and laborious life of thoſe whom Plato calls Politicians. but when I ſaw my country had changed its aſpect, and that I could no longer be of uſe to her in high employments, I ſought to ſerve her by the ſciences, and retired to my country-ſeats, in order to apply myſelf to contemplation, and the ſtudy of truth.

DEMOSTHENES.

That is to ſay, philoſophy was your laſt reſort, when you had no longer any ſhare in the adminiſtration, and that then you had a mind to diſtinguiſh yourſelf by your ſtudies: for it was glory more than virtue that you purſued in them.

CICERO.

'Tis needleſs to lie, I ever loved glory, as an attendant of virtue.

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